

THE  
SERMON  
upon the first Four  
Chapters, and Part  
of the fifth of  
Ecclesiastes.

Preached at Hamdon,  
by G. Gifford.

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TO. THE RIGHT  
Honourable, and vertuous  
Lady, the Lady Anne, Coun-  
tesse of Warwike.



Vr Lord &  
master(Right  
Honourable)  
foretelling the  
state of the  
worlde in the  
latter dayes.

with, it shall bee as it was in the  
ime of Noe. They eat, they drake,  
bey maried wenes, & gaue in ma-  
riage, vnto the day that Noe wēt  
Luke.17.

# The Epistle

into the Arke : and the flood came and destroyed them. Likewise also as it was in the daies of Lot: they eat, they dranke, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builte. But in the day that Lot went out of Sodome, it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all. This prophecie must needs be fulfilled, and in the one part it is already in our eies. For mens harts were neuer more generally, and of all sortes, set vpon riches and pleasures, then now towarde the coming of Christ to make the dissolution. I holde it therefore the dutie of all Gods faithfull messengers, most instantly to warne their Christian people, to beware, least they also

## Dedicatore.

also bee carried awaye with the  
stremme of this common infection.  
Hereby was I moued to make spe-  
ciall choyse of the Booke called Ec-  
clesiastes, for to expound the same  
vnto that people which I teach, be-  
ing wholly framed for the purpose,  
to drawe men from the vanities of  
this world. It was set forth by that  
noble king Solomon, who was the  
wised, the richest, and highest in  
royaltie & honour vnder the Hea-  
vens. He made the greatest triall,  
and had the deepest experience in  
all the chiefe and moste precions  
things of this world. He was ledde  
also by a higher spirite then his  
owne, being a worthy Prophete of  
God.

# The Epistle

After I had finished this booke,  
and my Sermons noted by one that  
did write, I was requested to per-  
vse & to perfect them, in some bet-  
ter sort for the Printe: Which as  
leasure serued I haue performed in  
one part. If that weake measure of  
giftes, whiche the Lord hath be-  
stowed vpon me, bring any good by  
this trauaile vnto the Churche, I  
shall be glad: and ready to bestow  
some paines, (if it please God) a-  
bout the rest.

I am bold to offer this vnto your  
Ladyship, as a token of a dutifull  
and thankefull minde, for so hono-  
rable fauours as I haue receyued  
frō the right Honourable my Lord  
the Earle of Warwike, and from  
your

## Dedicatore.

your Honour. I am also encouraged herevnto, with this, that your Ladyship hath long time continued an earnest louer, and zealous professor of the glorious Gospell of Iesus Christ. My earnest prayer is, that God will continue and increase the same, with all heauenly giftes, and vertues of his holy spirite, to the glory of his most holy name, the good of his Church, and your owne eternall ioye.

Amen.

Your H. most dutifull  
to commaund,  
George Gyffard.

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## *The first Sermon.*

### **Ecclesiastes. Chap. I.**



He wordes of Ecclesiastes, the sonne of Dauid, king in Ierusalem.

2 Vanitie of vanities, faith Ecclesiastes, vanitie of vanities, all is

nitie.

3 What profit remayneth to a man all his labour, in which he laboureth under the sunne?

4 One generation passeth away, and other commeth, but the earth abideth for euer.

5 The Sunne ariseth, the Sunne goeth downe, and hasteth againe to the place where it did rise.

6 The wind goeth toward the South, compasseth about toward the North.

Com.

# The first Sermon.

Compassing , compassing goeth the  
winde, and the winde returneth by his  
circuities .

7 All flouds runne into the sea, & ye  
the sea is not filled , whether the flouds  
runne , from thence they speedelie re-  
turne to goe .

8 All things are weary, man is not a-  
ble to vtter it , the eye is not satisfied  
with seeing , neither is the eare filled  
with hearing .

9 That which hath been, is the same  
that shalbe , and that which hath beene  
done, is the same that shall be done, nei-  
ther is there any thing new vnder the  
sunne .

10 Is there any thing of which it is  
said, behold this, this is new? it hath been  
in the ages that were before vs .

11 There is no remembrance of for-  
mer things, also, of later thinges which  
shall be , there shall be no remembrance  
with those that come after .

Eccle-

## Ecclesiastes. Chap. 1.



He wordes of Ecclesiastes, &c.

This Inscription of the booke sheweth whose doing it was, when it is said, they be the wordes of Ecclesiastes, the sonne of Dauid, king in Jerusalem, this was king Solomon. They be his wordes, and his writing. Hee set it forth for an instruction of Gods people in all ages.

If any will object, that here is no proper name mentioned, and all the kinges of Iuda were the sons of Dauid: why might not this Ecclesiastes bee Ezechia, Iehosaphat, or some other of the godly kinges, before, or after them. I answeare, that the sonne of Dauid, which wrote this booke, was he that did excell in wisdom.

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wisdom all that were before him in Jerusalem, ( as it is expressed in the 16. verse of this Chapter, ) and therefore could be no other but Solomon. For of him God

2. Chro. 1. saith, 2. Chro. 1. Because thou hast asked wisdom, wisdom is granted unto thee and riches, and honour, so that there hath not beene the like among the kinges that haue beene before thee, neither after thee shall there be the like.

It may be demanded, why he doeth not, (as in the Proverbes, & in the Song of Songes, which hee made of Christ and his Church,) call himselfe by his vsual name, Solomon, by which hee was best knownen: but doeth take a strange name, not vsed elsewhere in all the Scriptures: For through this booke hee calleth himselfe in Hebrewe, Koheleth. In deed, this is somewhat to be stood vpon: and I will briefly shewe you the reason of it, which is to be gathered from the signification of the word.

The Greekes did translate this word Koheleth, Ecclesiastes, and that is in our English tongue, a Preacher: and there-

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true we say in our translation, the words  
of the Preacher, and so it should be the  
name of an office, or function, if we take  
it in that sence. But we never finde any  
Prophet, Priest, or Teacher, in all the  
whole Bible, called Koheleth: & doubt-  
less, if he had meant to call himself a  
Preacher, he would haue said, The words  
of Kohel, rather than Koheleth, which is  
in the Feminine gender.

Kahal is an assemblie, & congregation  
of people, or the Church. Koheleth might  
very well carie this signification, to be  
all one that doeth gather the same together,  
or that doeth speake in the assemblie: but  
that he useth (as I said) the Feminine  
gender, and therefore it carieth the most  
fitte sence, that he calleth himselfe an Ec-  
clesiasticall person, (not as we call them  
Ecclesiasticall which beare office in the  
Church-matters) but a person that is of  
the Church, or a soule united to the church,  
or speaking in the church. Wherby we  
may perceiue, that this name is a note  
for ever of his repentance, how that he  
forsooke the evill into which he had fallen,  
and

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1.Kings.

11.

and turned againe to the Lord his God. For the holie Scripture doth testifie, that Solomon did marrie outlandish women, which were Idolaters, they drew away his heart, so that he sinned, and fell grievously. He was reproued of God for it, as we read, 1.Kings 11. He made this booke, to remayne as a publike record of his returne, and therfore he is Koheleth, a person, or a soule reconciled to God, and to his Church. In this sence we may call him Ecclesiastes.

I know it will be replied by some, that the word of God doth not any where testifie, that Solomon euer repented, after his great fall, but leaueth it in doubt: and to proue his repentance by this one title, by which he doeth name himselfe, is but a weake reason. For, let the signification of the name be certaine, yet is it vncertaine, whether he wrote this booke after his fall. To this I answeare, that he did write it after the long triall and experiance which he had made in all things vnder the sunne, and no doubt, after his fall. For, touching his repentance, al- though

though it be not said any where, in these  
express words, Solomon repented: yet  
may it bee proued by necessarie conse-  
quence out of the scriptures, that he did  
unfaynedly repent.

I reason thus. He was one of Gods  
elect, therefore he returned to his God by  
true repentance, seeing it is vnpossible,  
that the elect should perish, Math. 24. <sup>To</sup> Math. 24.  
proue that he was Gods elect, I first al-  
ledge that which was said to David at  
his birth, 2.Sam. 12. & which Nehemiah <sup>2.Sam.12.</sup>  
doeth speake of him, Chap. 13. Nathan <sup>Nehe. 13.</sup>  
the Prophet was sent to David from the  
Lord, willing him to call his name Iede-  
diah, rendering this cause, that God loued  
him.

Nehemiah speaking of the fall of So-  
lomon, saith, yet he was beloved of his  
God, grounding upon those wordes of  
Nathan. What a speech were this, to say,  
hee was beloved of his God, if he were  
not gods elect? Doeth the scripture ever  
speake so of any reprobate? God saith by  
the prophet Malachic, Chap. 1. Iacob <sup>Mal.1.</sup>  
haue I loued, and Esau haue I hated.

Saint

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Rom.9.

Saint Paul hereupon doeth argue, Rom. 9. and proue that God hath chosen Jacob. And why may we not reason thus vpon these words, the Lord loueth him, he was beloved of his God: therfore he was Gods elect. Then the Scripture leaueth not his repentance in doubt. I will not stand vpon this, that hee was a figure of

Psalm.45. Christ, Psal.45. That hee was an excellent Prophet, opening high mysteries of Christ and his Church: but I will come

1. Chr. 17. to that which is written of him, 1. Chr. 17. where God saith to Dauid, I will be his father, and he shall be my sonne, and I will not take away my mercie from him, as I did from him that was before thee.

Hebr.1.

Psalm.2.

Some wil say this is spoke of Christ, for the title is too high for any Angell, Heb.1. I answere, that God said of Dauid, thou art my sonne: but yet, as he was the figure of Christ, Psal.2. and so here of Solomon, for this canot be denied, that the Lord speaketh it of that sonne of Dauid, which should build the materiall Temple, which David had in purpose

for

# The first Sermon. 5

for to build: and God said of this man, I will be his father, and he shall be my sonne, and I will not take my mercie from him. If God did not take his mercie from him, then he repented. When Solomon was dead, his way is ioyned with the way of Dauid his father. For Rehoboā his sonne did wel thre yeres, and those thre yeres he is saide to haue walked in the way of Dauid and Solomon, 2. Chiton. i. i. Solomons beginning was god, and so was his ende, or else he shoulde not be coupled with Dauid. And thus we see he was Gods elect, and therefore repented, and became Koheleth. So that we hold for certaintie, that this name which he geueth himself, and this booke, are for publike note, and record of his repentance, and reconciliacion to God, and his Church.

2. Chr. ii.

Thus much of the Author of this booke, and for what cause he calleth hym selfe by this unusuall name. Now we must obserue to what end he made it, or what was his chiese purpose and intent in writing: which in few wordes I may  
say.

W

say

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say was this, even to instruct men how to come vnto the true blessednesse. A worthy worke, and most profitable vnto al that thirst and long for saluation. The whole worke consisteth of two partes. For he draweth men first frō the wrong way. Those that set their hearts vpon the riches, the hono:rs, the pleasures, and the wisdome vnder the sunne, to seeke any felicitie or good in them, are in a wrong way. From this he persuadeth: then he setteth forth the right way vnto blessednesse, which is in the true worship and feare of God. Hereunto he moueth very carefullly. We must note, that he beginneth with the vanitie and miserie of all thinges vnder the Sunne, because no man can worship God a right, or feare him in truth, vntil he haue learned to renounce the world. Marke well what our Lord saith, No man can serue two Masters, ye can not serue God and Mammon, Math. 6. No man can loue God, which loueth the world. For thus it is plainly said: Loue not the worlde, neither the things of the worlde, if any man

Math. 6.

gal

# The first Sermon. 6

man loue the world, the loue of the Father is not in him. For whatsoever is in the world, as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eies, and the pride of life, is not of the father, but is of the world. 1. Ioh. 2. 1. Ioh. 2.  
The loue of the world is enmitie against God, so that he which will be a freind of the world, maketh himselfe the enemy of God. Iam. 4. Iam. 4.

In the same place also wee learne, that such as loue the worlde, comunitte whoredome against God: for he calleth them adulterers, and adulteresses. It is because mans heart and soule ought to be maried to God, and to be kept chaste and pure vnto him for the loue: now when it doth give away y loue vnto the world, and doth imbrace it as a sweete Ladie in which it doth delight, it committeth spirituall whoredome. For the same cause the holy Ghost calleth the covetous man an Idolater. Ephes. 5. His harte should Ephes. 5. be set vpon God, and it is set vpon the world, he should trust in the living God, and he doth trust in riches. What is this but to set vp an Idoll? The cares also of

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this world, and the deceitfulnesse of riches, are thornes which choake the good seede of life. Math. 13. Plow up your fallow and sowe not among the thornes, saith God vnto his people, Icrem. 4. By all these places we may see how necessarie it is, that before Solomon do come to teach men where they shall seeke true blessednes, he emptieth their harts of the loue and care of earthly things: and this is that I said, he draweth men first from the wrong way. How well he doth performe this, we shall understande, if the Lord do give vs eares to heare.

Verse. 2.

Vanitie of vanities, saith Ecclesiastes: vanitie of vanities, all is vanitie. Now weare come to the matter. For this is his proposition, in which he propoundeth and affirmeth that, which afterward he manifesteth & proueth by arguments. It containeth in it the first of those two heads or points of doctrine: namely, that in all things vnder heauen, there is nothing to be found but extreme vanitie, and miserie, and therefore such as seeks the world are in a wrong way. He pro-

noun-

# The first Sermon. 7

ounceeth this (as we all may see) with a  
most vehement outcrie, and as it were,  
with the shrill sound of a Trumpet. The  
dul harte of man doth force him thereunto.  
For we are all by nature so earthly  
minded, so drowned and overwhelmed  
in the lusts and pleasures of this world,  
and our eares so stopped with earth, that  
we can hardly be made to heare. Nay to  
say the truth, let him speak never so lowd  
and shrill, to draw mens heartes from  
this world, except God worke by his spi-  
rite, and giue eares, hee speaketh unto  
stones. Ponder wel in your minds with  
earnest meditation, the waight of this  
phrase, Vanitie of vanities, and the same  
doubled with this addition, all is vanitie,  
and see if yee can comprehend what the  
spirit of God doth here witer, concerning  
the extreme vanitie of all things in this  
worlde, so to quench the flames of our  
mad loue towardes the same. For I had  
rather thus exhort men unto such medi-  
tation of his words, then to stand in ope-  
ning his phrase and manner of speach.  
Consider therfore that he contenteth not

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himselfe, to say all is vaine, but vanitie  
it selfe, yea the vanitie of vanities.

And seeing our vnbeliere is such, that  
we can not giue credite vnto the wordes  
of God, where it doth but affirme, and  
the spirite of truth doth thus farre yeld  
vnto vs, as to make p̄mose by reasons  
and argumentes of that which hee here  
uttereth, let not vs be wanting on our  
parts through carelesse negligence, and  
so heape sinne vpon sinne, vnto our grea-  
ter condemnation. For the more graci-  
ously hee applieth himselfe for to heale  
our soules, we ( refusing or neglecting  
this bountifullnes ) the more we heape  
up ingratitude, yea the more iust and  
heauie is our damnation.

Verse.3.

What profit is there vnto a man of  
all his trauell, in which he trauelth vn-  
der the Sunne? Here we haue the first  
reason, which he vseth to p̄oue his pro-  
position. He doeth not expresse euerie  
part of the argument, but the assumption  
only. For the principle vpon which he  
groundeth, is so cleere, that there is no  
head so dull, but doeth acknowledge it:

and

and therefore is omitted. Neuerthelesse  
for your helpe I will note it. This it is,  
about whatsoeuer there is labour spent,  
yea such labour as carieth with it griefe,  
(for he bleseth a word that signifieth labou  
with molestation) and no profite ariseth  
thereof, there all is extreme vanitie and  
misery. Who is (I say) such a dullard,  
yea such a blocke, that he will denie this,  
or call it into question: aske a foole, and  
he can say, it is vanitie to labour soe and  
receive no profite thereby: then if it be  
þrowued, that man of all his soe labour  
wherin he laboureth & vereth himselfe  
vnder the Sunne, (that is in worldly af-  
faires) receiueth no profite: shall it not  
follow that all these things are vanitie,  
yea euен vanitie of vanities:

Thus we are to consider of the whole  
reason: the first part, which is the grōud  
of this argument, soe toile with vera-  
tion and no profite, is vanitie, as I said,  
is so cleere that the blind do see it, none  
denie it: men do also feele and find by ex-  
perience, that worldly things are gotten  
and kept with great labour, trouble and

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molestation. What neede he then say to make any declaration of that, vntille he would light a candle at none? But the other point, namely that man hath no profit of all his labours & vexations, is not belied. For would the whole world be so mad as to stand to fill a bottomlesse tub? We see all the world is busied to get earthly things, if there be no profit ensu-  
ing, it is no better then to fill a bottom-  
lesse tub. Would men take such paines  
to heape vp riches, to clime to honours, to  
fill and stuffe themselves with delights &  
pleasures, yea even to sell their soules  
and bodies to the Diuell to come by the  
same, if they thought there were no pro-  
fit remaining vnto them? It is there-  
fore out of all doubt, that men do make  
their reckoning and cast their account, to  
receive great commodities and fruite by  
their laboures: this then being not belie-  
ued, but called in question, he doth stande  
so prone it, and this one point being pro-  
ued, all the argument standeth firme and  
manifest. And howsooner it serueth vnto  
mans blind nature, that there is pro-  
fit

site and commodicie to be looked for in the  
trauaile for earthly things: yet because  
he proueth and manisfeteth by two nota-  
ble reasons that there is none, he doeth  
shake it of as it were in scorne, and saith  
not, there is no profit, but what profit is  
there unto man of all his sore tranaile,  
wherin he trauaileth vnder the sunne?

He vseth in deed divers reasons after-  
ward, for to perswade men in this point  
wherein they are so madly blinded, but  
I say two, because in the words next fol-  
lowing he vseth two generall argu-  
ments, the one taken from the estate and  
condition that man is in which tranaileth:  
the other frō the estate of the things  
in which, and for which he doth tranaile.  
O that men could be brought to under-  
stand the aright, that they might see how  
they laboř without al profit for this pre-  
sent world, they would not ver theselues  
& destroy their soules for to get nothing.  
They would not be so grievously torne-  
ted with sorrow & care, for the losse of the  
world, forgoynge that which is nothing.  
But alas how shall we be brought to be-  
lieue

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lēue this: we make account of no gaine,  
but when we finde the treasures of the  
earth. We feele no losse, but whē we for-  
goe them, this is our madnesse, vntill it  
please God to giue vs better wisedome,  
and to open the eies of our mind, that we  
may acknowledge, that the thinges which  
are seene be temporall, and the thinges  
which are not seene, eternall. That we  
may labour for the true treasure: not for  
the meate which perisheth, but for that  
which indureth vnto eternall life. Ioh. 6.  
Beloued, lay vp this in your hart, that  
Gods spirit here affirmeth: namely, that  
a man hath no profite of all his soze tra-  
uaile, wherein he trauaileth vnder the  
Sunne.

Consider the reason by which he pro-  
ueth it, if yee can come to be perswaded  
to belieue it, to feele it to be so, ye haue at-  
tained to a great matter, yee haue greatly  
profited, your hart is rid and cured of a  
soze disease, yee haue made a great steppe  
toward the kingdome of heauen. For yee  
shal be deliuered from that which S.Paul  
speaketh, 1.Tim. 6. They that would be  
rich

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ich fal into temptation and into a snare,  
and into many folish and noysome lusts,  
which drowne men in destruction & per-  
dition: for the loue of monie is the roote  
of all euill, which while some haue lusted  
after, they haue erred from the faith, and  
haue pearced themselves through with  
many sorrowes. I say, if a man be tho-  
roughly persuaded in his hart, that there  
is no profite of the trauaile vnder the  
sunne, he shal be free from this daunger  
that all worldlings be in. Let vs see the  
proues.

One generation passeth away, and Verse.4.  
another generation commeth, &c. Here  
wee haue the first reason, by which hee  
proueth, that a man hath no profite of all  
his trauaile, wherin he trauaileth vnder  
the sunne: and ye see it is drawen front  
the estate which man is in. He is mortal,  
his dayes are fewe, his continuance is  
short vpon the earth: for he hath but the  
time of his generation, he geueth place,  
and never returneth againe, but another  
generation succedeth. Finally, his es-  
tate is more vaine then the estate of  
other

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other creatures, as it is set forth by comparison in the verses following. Therefore there remayneth to him no profite of al his sore trauaile, wherin he trauaileth vnder the sunne.

Brethren, we know it is in all mens mouthes, we are mortall, we must die, there is no remedie, we must make our bed, and lie downe in the darke: we haue but our time here. Againe, where shall we finde that foole, which looketh to haue any portion after he is dead, of all the thinges which are wrought vnder the Sunne? Is there any which is perswaded he shall come againe to looke vpon his workes, to take pleasure in them? Doeth he thinke that his riches shal feed him, or cloath him any more? Doubtles we all know, we must tarie here but a time, and then death will cut vs off. We are fully perswaded, that we shall never haue vse of any thing which we possesse here.

How doeth it then come to passe, that (cleane contrarie vnto this their knowledge,) men set their heartes vpon this world,

world, and looke for profit by their la-  
re, hours? There is some what that doeth  
e of seduce men, and quench the light of this  
eth knowledge, or els how could it be thus?

In dede, there be divers thinges which  
ns doe seduce men, and quench the light of  
ie, this knowledge: so that although they  
ur know they be mortal, yet can they not see  
ue that this is a sufficient argument, to  
all proue that all their trauaile for earthly  
ne things, is to no profit: but they set their  
he heart upon them, and couet them as gree-  
delis, as if they shoulde live upon earth  
soe aet.

I will note unto you some what which  
doeth make men mad even against their  
knowledge. Here is one great cause, that  
such a thicke darke miste doeth compasse  
men round about, that they cannot see a  
farre of, but even at hand. They be not  
able to behold eternitie, and to take upon  
that which continueth for ever: and that  
doeth make them esteeme this world, as  
if it were all in all. Ten thousand yeres  
(in respect of eternitie) are but a momet,  
and as nothing, if we could wel discerne,  
and

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and judge aright.

And behold what account man maketh of threescore and ten, they be even as a woorlde vnto him. For these, and about these, for to maintain his estate in them, he bendeth all the powers of his minde, applygeth all his studiis and indeuoures, laboureth, toyleth, and vexeth him selfe marueulously like a foole. Then we see, that this naturall sparke of light, wherby men doe perceiue they must after certain yeres die, and depart from all their labours, is not sufficient to make them wise, nor deliner them, because they are compassed about with darkenes most misera-ble, which causeth them to erre, and goe out of the way, as much, as if there were no sparke of knowledge at all in y mind.

It is farre more easie, and possible, for a man to see clairly twenty mile with his bodily eyes, through the thickest mist, then with all the light of nature, to looke beyond this world.

Here come the great wise men of the world to be fooles: for, with all the light of understanding which they have, they

be notable to looke any further, but vpon  
the riches and glory of this world. They  
can not be perswaded that a man shall  
receive no profit of all his labour, be-  
cause hee shall die. It is not within the  
opasse of their vew to looke vpon things  
eternall, to balew them, and from them  
to descend to the things present, and by  
comparison to find that the glory of this  
worlde, though it were for ten thousand  
yeres is utterly vaine, and hath no pro-  
fit in it. I say they be not able to do this  
without speciall grace, toみて with  
this, and to recover men from such folly.  
Solomon bleseth a comparison betwene  
man and other creatures, by which it ap-  
peareth, that besides this that he is mor-  
e tall, his estate is the most vaine and tran-  
sitory of many other. The earth that is  
vpon moueable and standeth for ever. One  
generation of men doth succede another,  
and for a little time as it were play their  
part vpon it, as vpon a stage: some hath  
a longer part then other, but none pas-  
seth his generation.

What is the life of one man, compared  
with

## The first Sermon.

With the continuance of the earth? ther  
be other creatures, as the Sunne, the  
winde, and the waters, whose estate ser-  
ueth to be unconstant: but yet man is no  
to be compared with them, for they re-  
turne againe into their former place, ha-  
passeth away, and both never returne a-  
ny more. The Sunne ariseth (saith he)  
the Sunne goeth downe and hasteth to  
his place againe where it did arise, the  
winde goeth toward the South, and com-  
passeth about to the North: compassing  
compassing about goeth the winde, & the  
winde returneth by his circuites. All  
Clouds runne into the sea, and yet the sea  
is not filled, to the place whither y<sup>e</sup> clouds  
runne, from thence they spedily returne.  
Touching the Sunne and the windes  
there is no difficultie, we all see they re-  
turne againe to their former estate, but  
this last of the waters, needeth exposition.  
They be often displaced, but they mak-  
hast againe unto their owne place, as we  
as the sunne and the winds, but not so  
apparantly. But if we marke what the  
Scripture teacheth, we shall see it. In the  
creation

creation of the worlde, God set the waters  
in two places, Gen. 1. The waters vnt- Gen. 1.  
er the firmament he layd vpon heapes,  
and called them **Seas**. The waters a-  
bove the firmament he hath hanged aloft  
in the clowdes: these he carrieth all ouer  
the worlde, causeith them to drop downe  
and to water the earth. They drop down  
in great plentie: part of them falle into  
ballies, make a floud, and with all spede  
runne into the sea. Another part sinke  
into the ground, where they, by little  
and little, by drayning, make together,  
and by hollow vaines of the earth, from  
hilles and mountaines, breake forth in  
springs, and make rivers.

These also, though a little stayed af-  
ter their fellowes, runne into the **Sea**.  
How commeth it then to passe, that in so  
many hundreth, and thousands of yeres,  
the sea is not filled? This is his reason,  
by whiche he pouereth, that they do returne  
againe into their owne place, and do not  
abide in the sea: for if they did abide there  
the sea woulde be filled. They be drawnen  
up by the sunne into the clowdes, and so

# The first Sermon.

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Clouds runne into the sea, and yet the sea  
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vallies, make a floud, and with all spede  
runne into the sea. Another part sink  
into the ground, where they, by little  
and little, by dryning, mete together,  
and by hollow vaines of the earth, from  
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many hundreth, and thousands of yers,  
the sea is not filled? This is his reason,  
by whiche he proueth, that they do returne  
again into their owne place, and do not  
abide in the sea: for if they did abide there  
the sea wold be filled. They be drawn  
up by the sunne into the clowdes, and so

# The first Sermon.

some againe into their first place. These then returne againe into their place, but man doeth never return againe into his.

All clouds runne into the sea, and yet the sea is not filled, therefore the waters are drawen vp into the cloudes againe, or els the sea would be filled. This reason may seeme not to be firme, because the seas are so full of them selues, that the waters would issue forth, and couer the highest mountaines, if God did not (by his decrete) holde them in, for they couered all at the first, & at the stoud, when

**Psal. 104.** God let them forth. And the **Psal. 104.** saith, the waters would stand aboue the mountaines, at Gods thundering voice they made haste into the place appointed for them, and so the dry land did appere.

I answere, that God hath laide them on heapes in the middest of the seas, and left space toward the shoare for y clouds to descend in: & so here is a double wonder, and nothing contrarie to Solomons reason.

The holy man Job, chap. 14. doth after the same manner, set forth the vaine estate

estate of man in this worlde: there is hope (saith he) of a tree, if it be cut downe, that it will sproute againe, and that the tender branch therof wil not cease. Wher the roote therof is olde in the earth, and the stocke thereof die in the dust, it will spring againe at the smell of waters, and make a bough like a plant. But man is sick, and dieth, man genereth vp the ghost, and where is he? As if he should say, he never returneth againe, his place doeth not know him any more. Then is it a thing manifest, if we could see, that of all vanities (for al creatures here are in vanitie) mans vanitie is the greatest, his estate is the woorst. Some of them continue firme, he passeth away: others are remoued, but returne againe unto their former place, he doeth not returne any more.

The scripture bleseth yet further comparisons: as when it saith, All flesh is grasse, and the glorie of man is as the floure of the grasse: the grasse withereth, the floure fadeth. 1. Pet. 1. 1. Pet. 1.

Saint Iames Chap. 4. saith, that our life Iam. 4.

# The first Sermon.

life is a vapo<sup>r</sup>, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth. The Prophet Dauid useth a comparison beyonde all Psalm.62. these, Psal. 62. For he compareth the state of man, yea euen of princes, with vanitie it selfe, and maketh it the lighter. These be his words. The sonnes of base persons are vanitie, the sonnes of nobles are deceite. If they be put together in the ballance, they will ascende aboue vanitie. Put all men in one ballance, and vanitie in the other, and they will goe by warde, and be found the lighter. For, the heauier end of the ballance goeth downward, and the lighter ascendeth.

How commeth it to passe then, that men, yea, such as shoulde be wise, and indeede doe take themselues of all other to be the wisest, are so bewitched, and blinded, that they make so great account of their estate in this present life, as if it were all in al? They thinke there is profit and commoditie of their labours, and that great, no man can persuade them to the contrarie.

Alas, what shoulde I say here? I may well

# The first Sermon. 15

well lament and bewayle our miserable blindnes, I knowe not how to cure it. There be so many thinges that doe deceiue, it is almost without end.

Let it be that this worde of the Lord be received, man is mortall, he hath but his generation, he passeth away as a shadow and never returneth againe, his estate and condition is so vaine and transitorie, that compared with other creatures, he is farre inferior: Yet this conclusion will not be received, therefore their remaineth no profite vnto man of all his trauaile, wherin he trauaileth vnder the sunne, for this sticketh fast in the hart. Although the daies of man upon the earth be but as a vapo: that appeareth for a short time and then vanisheth, yea howsoever he passe away and returne no more, and is inferiour to other creatures, yet he receiuesth very great profite by his laboures, and that many waies. He hath to feed and clothe himselfe withall, and to serue other necessarie vses.

He commeth to haue countenance in the world, of worship and honour: his va-

# The first Sermon.

giant acts and wisdome, shall be renowned vnto all posteritie. He doth conuey ouer his honour and possessions vnto his sonne, who is as deere vnto him as his owne soule. He shall florish and prosper in the world. He shall continue the name & countenance of his father, are not these great commodities, and worth the trauailing for: I answer, that these had need be worth somewhat, for in daede they be the things for which many thousands do sell there soules and bodies to the Deuile. They be those rocks against which men do runne and make shipwacke of faith and a good conscience, & so dwyne themselves in perdition and destruction. The wise men of the worlde are poisoned and killed with these baites. The Deuile doth suggest them, and mans blind hart receiueth them euен against the truth.

For let vs looke well into the matter, and we shall find, that there is nothing in all these but mere deceit: the truth of this sentence shall continue firme, that there is no profit vnto a man of all his labours, wherein he laboureth vnder the Sunne.

Sunne. Touching the first, there is some present commoditie in daede obtained by mans labour, for he eateth of the labour of his handes: he hath to clothe himselfe withall. Men are commanded to labour for that purpose, this beyng Gods ordinance, In the sweat of thy browes thou shalt eat bread. Gen. 3. Genes. 3.

Moreover, by their industrie and labour men do provide somewhat to leue unto their children, as nature bindeth them, & the Scripture pronounceth such as do not this to be worse then infidels. Neuerthelesse here is nothing to contrary that which Solomon teacheth, that there is no profit to a man of all his sore trauaile. For he vseth a worde which signifieth a profit that doth remaine, and continue or sticke by a man. All present commodities are vaine, yea most vaine, because they continue not with menne. Againe here is nothing to drive men frō labour & diligence about earthly things: but to moderate mens labours, and to correct immoderate & vaine care, which draweth men from the studie of better

# The first Sermon.

things. It is the same doctrine which  
John.6. Christ teacheth, John.6. Labour not for  
the meat that perisheth, but for the meat  
that indureth unto eternall life. And  
which S. Paule exhorteth unto. 1. Cor.7.  
1. Cor.7. Let him that bieth be as though he posses-  
sed not, for þ fashion of this world passeth  
away. I may say further, that to haue  
riches, & honoris be good benefites, in this  
respect also that by þ men are the moze  
enabled to do good, and so to be rich in  
good workes. But as worldy men doo ac-  
count, and as they do couet them, there  
is no good in them at all: for if a mans  
substance be increased never so much, he  
shall carie none of it away with him, his  
pompe, saith the Prophet, shall not de-  
cend with him into the graue, Psalm.49.  
She doth often and vsually follow and  
accompany unto the graues mouth, but  
then returneth, & taketh her leaue. Well  
his sonne he is now a lost, this is as good  
to the father as if he had it himselfe. Yea  
we see many a miser labour like an horse  
and almost serue himselfe to make his  
sonne rich: þe continueth the name, the  
lands,

rich landes, and the houses haue the name set  
for upon them. What a goodly matter is  
that this: no doubt this seemeth a goodly mat-  
ter, yea so goodly, that it costeth (as I haue  
said) many a soule. The worldlings  
spare no trauaile to come to this. Looke  
whatsoever standeth in their way to let,  
they will tread it downe if they can, yea  
even Gods truth, all equitie, faith, and  
honestie.

This is the vaine glorie which the  
Prophet derideth, Psal. 49. Their minde  
is (saith he) that their houses may be for  
ever, their habitations from generation  
to generation, they call their names vpon  
their landes. But man is in honour and  
shall not continue, he is like the beastes  
that perish. This their way is their hope  
and their children approue their wordes.  
They shall lie as beastes in the graue,  
death shall be their sheepeheard. This, I  
say, is it which God speaketh touching  
the vayne glorie of blinde worldlings,  
which do more earnestly bende their  
minde to haue an house and glorie in the  
earth to all posteritie, then to seeke to  
know

# The first Sermon.

know god aright, to glory in him, to magnifie & set vp his hono<sup>r</sup>, and so to be glorified in the heauens for euer, to haue their house or name cōtinued, is but an earthly commodity, & shoulde not be so highly preferred. But let vs yet deal more particulerly in this: yf it be possible, some of our harts may be freed from this pestilent infection. Of all his stately palaces & pleasant orchyards, he is not alowed so much as one corner of an alley, or a gallery to walke in, after death hath arrested him. The body lieth in some vaut where it doth rotte: beyng in the life time a companion of Princes, now peraduenture a toade or snake or some base vermin, sitteth by as the onely companion. The fame and glorie is great, the name is vp on the houses and the lands. What doth this helpe his base dishonorabls bodie? these saeme swēete things, but that doth stinke. His soule because it did imbrace this present world, and so committed filthie whoredome and forsooke God, is in a worse place, whether the bodie shall also come. It lieth couered in shame before

God

# The first Sermon. 18

God and his Angels : is it any whit the  
better for a blaste of vaine praise and ho-  
uer among men : his sonne glistreth in  
gold, and is clothed in silkes, drinkeþ  
sweet wine with the pleasant noyse of  
melodie : the ffather lieth tormentèd in  
the darke pit of hell, where shall be wea-  
ring & gnashing of teeth for euer, where  
he can not hane so much as one droppe of  
water for to coole his tongue. He is be-  
come most wretched, hauing lost his soule  
for euer, for to get a little earthly glorie,  
and to make his sonne happy.

Luke.16.

But how far wide is he also in that ?  
what shall his sonne or his sonnes sonne  
find more then he himselfe did finde in  
these things ? let men say or thinke what  
they can , for any good that they shall be  
able to find, either to themselves or their  
children and posteritie in wordly things,  
& so applie their whole studie that way,  
as to increase riches, to rise vp to honours,  
and to injoy pleasant delights : let them  
glory in their wisdom by which they be  
aduanced, yet shall they be found stanke  
soules, and this doctrine, vanitie of vani-  
ties,

# 81 The first Sermon.

ties, all is vanitie, shalbe found true. Because there is no profit that doth remaine vnto a man of all his soye trauaile, wher in he trauaileth vnder the sunne, seeing death cutteth hym of after a few dayes, he can never returne againe, his place shall know him no more.

Then let this first argument of the wise King Solomon sincke into your mindes, to destroy the loue and care of earthly and transitorie things: that your harts may be free to seeke God, and to be set vpon heauenly things, in which there is true blessednes. Lay not vp treasure in earth, where rust and moth do corrupt, and where theues breake through and steale. But lay vp for your selues treasure in Heauen, where neither rust nor moth corrupt, and where theues do not breake through and steale. Math. 7. Be ready to distribute and to do good, that ye may be rich in good woakes.

Math. 7.

1. Tim. 6.

2. Cor. 9.

Remember what is said by the blessed Apostle, He that soweth sparinglie, shal reape sparingly: and he that soweth plentifullie, shal reape plentifallie. The

time

Be-  
time that ye live here is compared unto  
the seede time: your liberalitie, and distri-  
buting your goods to the poore, is the so-  
wing, and scattering abroad: because, as  
man seemeth to lose his seede, when he  
scattereth it, and burieth it in y ground:  
and yet it springeth vp, and the harvest  
commeth with great increase. Euen so,  
so mans thinking, he doeth depryue him-  
selfe of all that he getteth away, and yet  
is it farre other wise, for it bringeth the  
greatest increase of all other, by a plenti-  
full harvest, when God shall gene the re-  
ward.

He is a foole that hath seede, and good  
ground, and will let the season passe, and  
not cast any of it into the ground. The  
rich man is moze foole to hoarde vp golde  
and siluer, so that the rust of them shal be  
a witnes against him, and shall devoure  
his fleshe as fire: when he might scatter,  
and sowe, and reape life eternall.

Remember also what S. Paul saith,  
Galath. 6. He that soweth to the flesh,  
shall of the flesh reap corruption: he that  
soweth to the spirite, shall of the spirite  
reape

Iam.5.

Galat.6.

# The first Sermon.

reape life everlasting. The men that tra-  
uaile for this world, and prouide for the  
flesh, to satisfie the lustes thereof, heaping  
up riches, & bestowing them to that ende  
which they doe, when they labour so ear-  
nestly for the worldly wealth, for them-  
selves, and their childe<sup>re</sup>, doe so we to the  
flesh. All their trauaile is for the flesh, and  
for the maintenance of this vaine life.  
The haruest that these shall haue is cor-  
ruption. For, both they, & al these things  
corrupt, perish, and come to nougat.

Such as lay out, and distribute to the  
poore, such as employ their riches to ad-  
uance the gospel, to set forth Gods glory,  
and to be meanes to further their owne  
saluation, and the saluation of others:  
these so we to the spirite, there shall an  
haruest follow: they shall reape, and ga-  
ther sheaves of eternall life and glory.

Behold (belovid) what difference there  
is of riches laide vp in store for the flesh,  
and spent thereon: and the riches laid out  
to seeke the spirituall life, and heauenly  
treasure. Wisse are they which so we to  
the spirite, respecting this haruest, wher-

they shal reape with ioy: But fooles,  
and mad fooles are they, which labouē and  
re the selues for the flesh, to make them  
lues and their children rich, for they  
all finde no profit therein. The end is  
ruption, al vanisheth and commeth to  
end. For, what profit remayneth to  
man of all his sore trauaile, wherein he  
availeth vnder the sunne? when one  
eneration passeth away, & another ge-  
neration commeth.

Al these things are weary, man is not Verse.8:  
able to utter it, &c. This is the other rea-  
son which I speake of before, which hee  
bringeth to prove that there is no profit  
a man of all his trauaile. It is taken  
om the estate of the thinges in which, &  
& which, man doeth trauaile.

Their estate is vaine, and miserable:  
which is noted in this one worde, when  
he saith, they be wearie. For, it is as  
much as to say, that all thinges in this  
world are subiect vnto vanitie, and that  
in such deepe measure, as man is not a-  
ble with all the wit he hath, to compre-  
end, or to utter it. The blessed Apostle

S. Paul

# The first Sermon.

S. Paul Rom. 8. doeth handle and setteth forth this thing notable: how great the vanitie is, and how wearie all creatures be.

The fervent desire of the creature (saith hee) wayteth when the sonnes of God shalbe reuealed. For the creature subiect vnto vanitie, not of it owne accord, but for him that hath subiectedit her hope, because the creature shal be free from the bondage of corruption, vnto the libertie of the sonnes of God. For we know that every creature doeth groane and trauaile together in paine, even vnto this time.

Solomon saith, all things be so wearie that man is not able to suffer it. S. Paul saith, all creatures are subiect vnto vanitie, and the bondage of corruption, and long to be deliuered, which shalbe at the latter day. Their bondage is so exceeding great, that he saith, they doe groane and trauaile in paine. To say that the dumb and sencelesse creatures doe groane, and trauaile with paine, is all one as to say they be so wearie, man cannot suffer it.

Now we see somewhat the sence of the words, let vs consider the force of the reason. He that will finde any god that shal continue, or any thing that may better his estate, he must seeke it, and finde it in things whose estate is good and permanent, hee must not looke for it in thinges whose estate and condition is miserable, and subiect unto vanitie.

For wil any seeke for light in darkness? Is any man so simple, as to looke for blessednes from that which is vnder curse? Who looketh for freedome to be geue him of those that are in bondage? Then consider what he saith, all these thinges are wearie, man cannot vtter it. All creatures vnder the sunne, both those y haue life and sence, and those which are without sence, and euery one of them, are subiect to vanitie, and long to be deliuered from the bondage of corruption. They be so exceeding wearie, that they groane and strauaile in paine. Therefore man feeling his owne miserie, and beggerlines, coniecting to finde god, to be made happie, or at the least to haue his wretchednes miti-

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tigated, he must not seeke it in things vnder the sunne, for they are not able to releue themselves, nor to rid themselves out of the bondage of corruption, which lieth soze and heauie vpon them, making them grone.

What is the cause then that men seek for good in riches, in honours, and in pleasures? Why doe they make account that their miserie is asswaged, and mitigated by these? Doubtles there is no cause but blindnes, yea intollerable and lamentable blindnes: as they know not themselves, so haue they no eyes to see in what case all creatures vnder heauen be. For if men could be brought to see in dede, but what this is, all these things are weary, man cannot bittre it, they would stay, and turne back their eyes, and not so greedely and egarly pursue, and lay holde of those poore creatures, to seeke succour at their handes. They would say, we are wrong, these are wearie themselves, they cannot refresh vs: these are feble, weake, and transitorie, how shal they suppoſt & comfort vs? They be in bondage and mis-  
rie

rie, shall they relēue vs? Shall wee lay holde vpon them, for to stay vpon them, they wil sayle vs. We follow but a blast of wind, and gape to fill our bellies with the East winde. We goe about to ioyne vanitie vnto vanitie: for we seeke help of those which are in miserie as deep as our selues. I say it is an extreme blindnes, which causeth men not to perceiue this.

What then beloued? there is a naturall inclination in vs to seeke releefe and helpe. Yea, but let vs seeke it where it is to be found, euен in our Lorde God himselfe. Seeke as fast to lay hold on him, as the worldlings doe to lay hold on riches, ye shal finde more than they. Many say, who wil shew vs any good, saith Dauid, Psal.4. Lord lift vp the light of thy countenance vpon vs. Thou hast put more gladnes in my hart, then they had at such time as their cozne, and wine, and oyle abounded.

Psal.4.

The worldlings are glad when riches increase, but it is nothing to the gladnes which those finde, that seek the fauor and louing countenance of God. Seeke after

## The first Sermon.

things which are eternal, they wil never  
sayle ye. The heauens and the earth that  
now are, ware olde as doeth a garment,  
& shall be changed as a vesture. Psal. 102.  
Looke with the eyes of faith vpon þ newe  
heauens, and the newe earth, in which  
dwelleth righteousness, for such hath god  
promised, 2. Pet. 3.

In the wordes which follow vnto the  
12. verse, he doth set forth the same rea-  
son with an amplification: The eye is  
not satisfied with seeing, neither is the  
ear filled with hearing. The minde of  
man can not satisfie it selfe nor rest con-  
fected when it hath laid hold of all things  
vnder heauen. For the eye it selfe is a lit-  
tle thing & would soone be satisfied. The  
ear is shallow and were quickly filled,  
but þ mind which setteth these a worke,  
is insatiable. If men were not starke  
blind, might they not reason thus, when  
a man hath heaped vp all the treasures  
of the earth, when his wisdom is increa-  
sed, and he hath attained vnto the top of  
all the honour vnder heauen, yet is not  
his mind satisfied, he couereth still to see,

he

Psal. 102.

2. Pet. 3.

he coueteth to heare, he coueteth to haue.

Is it not a manifeste proufe that all things vnder the sunne, beyng in that vaine and transitorie estate whiche they be, are not able to easse the miserie of mans mind? the fulnesse of ioyes is in Gods presence alone, & at his right hand there is comely pleasure for euer more. What is then the reason that men do never cease when they haue attained great things, & yet feele no easse? Here is their foolish blindnesse, they still seekes for new things, they imagine that by a further and deeper reach, they shall finde some good.

Psal. 16.

Here come in new deuises, new honours, new pleasures, new workes, all new. He meeteth with this and sheweth that there is nothing new vnder the heauens. When they haue gone as farre as they can, yet shall not their eye come to see, nor their eare to heare any new thing. That (saith he) that hath been, is the same that shal be, and that whiche is done, is the same that shal be done, neither is there any thing new vnder the sunne. Is there

## The first Sermon.

any thing whereof it may be laid, behold this, this is new? It hath bene in the ages that were before vs. O that men did understand this, they would not be so mad as to be still insatiable touching þ world: their owne experiece would teach them, that nothing in this earth can content or easse their mind: am I not satisfied with that which I haue seene and heard, or that others before me haue attayned? Then shall I never, for there is no new thing to be found out, in which a man may find good.

Yea but men finde out thinges that be new. That is but our ignorance, for (saith he) there is no remembraunce of former things, also of things to come which shall be done, there shall be no remembraunce, with those that shall be after. There be thinges which seeme new (I speake of such as men seeke felicitie in) but it is because they are forgotten: so that the eye is never satisfied, looking for new things, the eare that doth hearken after them: and thus are men insatiable, but all in vaine, for in their new things where they seeks some

some good, they shall find nothing but old vanitie.

¶ then brethren for sake your world-  
ly cares, looke vpon your selues, yee are  
miserable, looke vpon the creatures, they  
are in such case as that they can not re-  
læue yee, looke so; nothing new among  
them that may content yee, & settle your  
mind to say, I am now eased, it is a baine  
studie there is nothing new, there is no-  
thing stable. Therefore seeke after the  
blessed God, to know him, to lay hold vpon  
him, and to possesse him, he shal suffice  
to make yee blessed, and to content your  
minde.

*The end of the first  
Sermon.*





## *The second Sermon.*

### *Ecclesiastes. Chap. 1.*

**Verse.12.**



Ecclesiastes, was king o-  
uer Israel in Ierusalem.

13 I gaue my heart to  
inquire, and make search  
in wisdome concerning al  
that is wrought vnder the heauens.  
This euill trauile hath God geuen to  
the sonnes of men, to occupie them  
therein.

14 I sawe all the workes which are  
wrought vnder the sunne, and beholde,  
all is vanitie, and vexation of the Spi-  
rite.

15 That which is crooked, cannot  
be made straight, and that which is  
wanting, cannot be numbered.

16 I speake in my heart, saying, I haue  
magnified, and increased wisdome a-  
boue

boue all that were before me in Ierusalem, and my heart hath seene much wis-  
dome and knowledge.

17 And I gaue my hart to know wis-  
dome, and the knowledge of extreme  
madnes and follie. I know that euē this  
is affliction of spirite.

18 For, in the multitude of wisdome  
there is much indignation, and he that  
increaseth knowledge, increaseth sor-  
rowe.



Ecclesiastes. Chap. I.



Ecclesiastes, was  
king, &c. In the  
former part of this  
Chapter we have  
had two reasons:  
the one drawn frō  
man himselfe, the  
other from the things about which he la-  
boureth, to prove that a man hath no pro-  
fite, nor good at all, whiche remayneth of  
all

## The second Sermon.

all his soye trouaile vnder the sunne, and  
therefore all is vanitie of vanities.

Now he procedeth forward, to shew  
that he himselfe made triall in all things  
vnder heauen, and found by full and per-  
fect experience, that in dede, in all those  
woikes vnder the sunne, wherein men  
doe seeke some good, there is nothing els  
but vanitie, miserie, and vexation of spi-  
rite. This his proceeding is a plaine de-  
monstration, that the disease (I meane of  
setting our hearts vpon things transito-  
rie) hath not onely taken deep roote in vs,  
but is also most pestilent and deadly. For,  
if it might easilie be cured, what neede  
should there be of heaping vp all manner  
of p̄roofs, and persuassions to draw away  
our hearts? And if it were not most dead-  
ly, why should there be such care taken  
about it?

Solomon did know right well by the  
holy spirite of the Lorde which guyded  
him, that all which can be said, is little e-  
nough in this case: nay, the most are so  
bewitched, that it doeth not help them at  
all. But the p̄rofe which is brought fro-

one mans expeſience, may ſeeme to be ouer weake and slender to moue all men in the world: euen the Princes, the riche, the wiſe and valiant, and to perſwade them to ceaſe from ſeeking god vnder the ſunne, for what is one man to try out all things to the full?

In deede leaſt we ſhould thiſke thus, before hee come to note what triall hee made, and ſo deliuer vnto vs what hee found, and what can be found, he ſpeaketh ſome what of his owne perſon, what hee was, and of what ablenes, and diligēce.

If it be ſuch a man which ſetteth forth his owne expeſience, as was thoroughlie able to ſearch out euerie matter, and alſo did it, and that in ſuch ſort, as all the men in the world (if they woulde ioyne together) cannot comenigh him, then may we be perſwaded by his expeſience. For, he is a foole that will thiſke to finde that which he could not. Nowe in very deede, ſuch a one was Solomon.

First, he was a king, as he ſaith, I Ecclesiastes was king. If any in the world be able and fitte for this worke, they be kings.

## The second Sermon.

kings. For they possesse the flower of all wherein there semeth to bee any good. There can be no experiēce of that which a man hath not. He was king ouer Israel in Jerusalem. This Israel was Gods chosen people, which he had magnified above all nations vnder heauen, and this was the citie of the great king, euen Jerusalem.

Here is a king higher then all y<sup>e</sup> kings of the earth. This man is not idle, but geneth himselfe to search out the workes that are wrought vnder the sunne, to see what was in them. Yea, but hee might finde naught in some, & yet in other some there might bee that which he sawe not. Let no such thought rise in your minde, for loke whatsoeuer is done, or that all Princes in the worlde are able for to do, yea, and all me whatsoeuer, he did search it. For so he saith, that he gaue his heart to searche out all the workes which are wrought vnder heauen. Doe not thinke, that yee can light vpon any one thing worth the search, which he hath not searched.

## The second Sermon. 27

It may be further objected , he that searcheth so many things, how can he do them all well ? To this he saith, that he did search by wisdome . He was not deceived, for wisdome guided him in every part , God gave him both wisdome and honour, and riches aboue all earthly creatures . He is a man euuen made fitte of God himselfe , to find out , and to tell vs what is in all the workes which are wrought vnder the Sunne . Let vs beleue him : lette vs not follow the bayne soles of the world which glue no credit vnto him, but seeke to find god where he could find none . He saith, it is an euill traualle which God hath giuen to the sons of men to be occupied in . He saith also, he beheld all, and all is vanitie and vexation of spirite .

Do men I pray ye beleue this ? Why do they then set their whole heart night and day vpon things that be transitorie ? They labour, but bring not any thing to passe worth their sore traualle : they be vexed and tormented in vaine , (God having in his iustice for sinne laid this euill tra-

## The second Sermon.

trauaile vpon Adams children) for he saith, that which is crooked can not be made straight, and that which is wanting can not be numbered. There is imbecillitie in mans workes, and that so great, that he can not make that straight which is crooked: there is such imperfection, that the wants and defects are infinit. If he looke vpon the creatures, if he looke vpon him selfe, or vpon the successe and euent of matters, all is crooked, he toileth but can not reforme it in any.

All the creatures are wearie, subiect vnto vanitie, and vnto the bondage of corruption, they grone and trauaile in paine. Man laboureth in them to builde and set vp some sure worke, but it will not be: for they decay, alter, and perish. He can by no means withstand or reme-  
die this crookednes: his skill & his power doo utterly faile him herein. Man him selfe is more crooked, his mind depraued, full of vtter blindnesse, the passions & af-  
fections most vile and corrupt, the bodie base and subiect vnto all diseases and in-  
combrances: yea both mind and body e-  
uery

very way in such crookednesse as is vn-  
speakeable. There is nothing straight in  
him, all goeth crooked and peruerse, he  
workeþ upon himselfe, and can make no  
part straight. For all the humane Sci-  
ence and wisdome vnder the heauens (if  
it were possible for one man to attaine  
and possesse it) is not able to giue him any  
sparkē of true light and knowledge of  
God, nor to clese or rid his soule from a  
ny one drop of that diuelish poison wher-  
with it is infected & depraued. Wise men  
micht well, and did seeme to haue made  
themselves much straighter then the cō-  
mon sort, but in very daēd their crooked-  
nesse remained still within.

I speake not of such as are regenerate  
by Gods holy spirite, but of those who  
were ledde onely by the light of nature.  
All their riches, their honour and power  
not able (they imploing their trauaile) to  
ease or recouer their bodies, to rescue the  
from the gout, or from an ague. The suc-  
cēsse of things is so crosse and vnlucky,  
they foreseing what they can, their igno-  
rance by which they take many times  
the

## The second Sermon.

the wrong course, mans skil being so imperfect, doth cause such infinite defectes, that Solomon beholding this in all the works wrought vnder the sunne, he doth pronounce that all is vanitie & vexation of spirit.

How cleare is this, man hath such imperfections, wantes, and errours in his workes as can not be numbered, all is crooked within him, without him, and about him, and he can make no one thing straight: therfore all his labours are lost, they be vaine, & miserable, carrying with them so soore affliction and vexation of the minde. Thus hath hee in generall pronounced, what he found in al the deuices, studies, and workes, which are wrought vnder heauen.

Now he procedeth vnto particular declaration: for hee goeth from point to point, shewing that in all the excellentest things vnder heauen, wherein there is any apperāce or hope of good to be found, there did he make search. And he did begin first of all with wisedome: Because in very deede, of all things transitorie, shē

is

is the flower. It is she that maketh men to differre most one from another, and to excel.

It falleth out oftentimes, that stanke swoles are riche, and in place of great honour. The bruite beastes doe enjoy delight and pleasures, as wel as men: but neither beast nor swole can possesse wisdome, but onely the wise man. If there be any true worthines, felicitie, excellencie, or good to be found in the creatures vnder the sunne, it is in wisdome: therefore he saith, I applyed my hart to know wisdome.

It may be said, that wisdome, (euening humane wisdome of which he now speakest) is high and deepe: who can searche into her treasures? who shall finde, or be able to value what she can afford? Most true it is, that wisdome is no easie thing to try. He must be no swole nor simple person: but he must possesse her, and that in exceeding great measure, which will discerne what her riches and pleasures be.

Marke therefore what hee saith, before he doeth tell that he applyed his hart

## The second Sermon.

to know wisdome. I said in mine heart (saith he) behold, I haue magnified, and increased wisdome aboue all that haue been before me in Ierusalē. Also, my hart hath seen much wisdom and knowledge, because God had indued him with greater wisdome and knowledge, than any man vnder heauen, he doeth gather thereby, that hee was the fittest for this purpose. He doeth encourage himselfe, and maketh it knownen vnto all, that he was thus set forward. He searcheth not at aduenture, he searcheth not in the darke, he hath his rule and his candle in his hand, euен the light and direction of wisdome her selfe. The wisest man vnder heauen searcheth out wisdome: yea, I may say moxe, let the wisdome of al the wise men in the world be laid together, it commeth short of his.

Some haue beeне greatly wise in the course of the heauens, some in the knowledge of nature in all creatures here belowe, some subtile Logicians, some eloquent Dratozs to perswade, some politike in making lawes to governe Cities and

## The second Sermon. 30

and commonwealths. Others have been famous and renowned for the skill of other noble sciences, as every mans heart led him: some to one, and some to another. In all these he hath surmounted them far, if they were layde together. 1.King.10 Hee sawe more, he did know more, and coulde tell more then all they. He was in deede the wonder of the world. The Queen of Sheba wondered at his wisdome, vntil there was no spirite in her, 1. Kings 10. Confessing that she did not beleue that which she heard of him, vntill she came and saw it with her eyes, and moreouer, that the one halfe was not tolde her. Hee excelled the fame that went of him. Then behold, here is the man which must tell vs what good is to be found in all the wisdome and skill of this worlde. He did abound in al manner of wisdome, & therfore gaue his heart to know her.

Moreouer as he was wise, so he tooke a good and perfect way to make a full search. It is expressed in these words, I gaue my hart to know wisdome, and the knowledge of extreme madnesse and fol-

## The second Sermon.

It is certaine, that euery thing is most perfectly manifested and knownen, by the contrarie. As for example: A man could never find so well the comfort and benefit of the light, if he were not sometimes compassed about with darkenesse. We best feele the swete, when we haue first tasted the sower. Health is more comfortable after greuous sickness, the pure white sheweth the brighter, when it is set by the blacke: euен so wisdome sheweth the greater glory, whē extreme madnesse and follie are set by her.

For this cause Solomon (to the end he might behold this goodly lady wisdome in her full beautie, and commoditie,) setteth by her extreme madnesse and follie. For together with the sight of this euill sauoured and deformed bedlem, with all her inconueniences, the ve w of wisdome doth set her out most excellently. All her brightness, all that she hath to delight, or to benefit, are displayed. We may sae then what ledde him to applie his hart to knowe extreme madnesse, or all kindes of madnesse, (for he useth the word in the plurall

## The second Sermon. 31

plurall number) and foolishnesse. It was not any loue that he bare unto them, but to finde out the perfection of wisedome through the knowledge of these. For by the vglines of madnesse & follie, the pleasant countenance of wisedome is more dea lightsome and amiable. The harmes, the inconueniences, and mischiefes which grow from those, to the annoyance of all mad raging fooles: do make knownen and manifest, what god, what treasures and cōmodities this wisedome doth bring unto him that doth possesse her.

¶ May we not thinke that Solomon did now beholde as it were an Angell in brightnesse and glorie, which might fill the mind with consolation & happiness: but marke what hee pronounceth in the next words following: I know also that this is affliction of spirite. What can be more plaine? There is a shew of god to be attained by humane wisedome, & men are wonderfullie allured and drawn in hope thereof: but when it commeth to the p̄f̄fe, they haue lost all their labour, there is naught but a māre illusion, the

## The second Sermon.

good is banished. What doe they find in  
steed thereof? Looke what he founnd, euē  
affliction of spirite, shall they find any  
better.

It may seeme very strange & absurd,  
that this wisdome, which hath alwaies  
beene so extolled, magnified, and honored  
of all nations in the world: so loued and  
imbraced of kings: so set forth and bew-  
tified with all the iewels and ornaments  
that might be by the skilfull and learned  
of all sortes, shoule thus be abased, as to  
be made but an illusion and a vaine de-  
ceipt, which in steed of good so sought and  
hoped for, doth bring nothing but afflictio-  
n of the spirit. The wise men of this world  
hauē in all ages thought their labours  
aboundantly recompensed by wisdome.

Solomon which had more then they  
all, pronounceyth, that it hath nothing but  
affliction of spirite. How commeth such  
contrarietie of iudgement? Doubtlesse  
from their blindnesse, they saw not that  
which he saw. Their eyes were daled  
with present glory and commodities: he  
beheld that it could not further a man v-

to true blessednesse in the kingdome of God. He did behold the weakenesse and imperfection which is in it, being vnable to make that straight which is crooked, especially in the depraued heart of man. So then let all her freends set her out to the vttermost of their skill, & paint forth her prayses in the freshest colours that they can : yet shall the sentence of this one man preuaile against them. He did know her moe perfectly then all they, he giueth the right sentence, they are deceipted. They say there is great good, he saith I know that this also is affliction of spirit. And he rendreth a reason thus : for in the abundance of wisdome, there is a boundance of indignation, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

He that would be in felicitie, must not saeke it in sorrowes and grieses of minde and bodie : but in things that are swete and pleasant. Happinesse is in ioy & consolation, bitternes and anguish are contrarie therunto. Then must it needs follow, that all those are deceiued utterly,

## The second Sermon.

which seeke felicitie in humane wisdom. Because the moze wisdome aboundeth, the moze doth indignation abound (as he did feele) and he that increaseth his skill, it is with soze trauaile, and it is full of sorowes. There may be many causes of trouble and disturbance of the mind with indignatio, where wisdome doth abound. For he shall see that there is no end, but an infinite trouble, question vpon question will arise, the wants & the aukness of matters will torment.

Againe, with what infinite trauails and care of mind and bodie, is knowledge come by? how haue men studied and weareied themselves all the daies of their life, to get knowledge? who is able to expresse the paines which the Philosophers did take, and yet none of them able to excell in all, but in some pieces as their affectiōs chiefly drew them. He that will be a perfect Logician, to haue the full vse of naturall reason in perfect rules, it is not the worke of a few daies, nor yet of a few yeares. It must be with long trauails, euē all his life, & yet he shal come short.

Cosmog.

Cosmographers, in describing all partes of this world, the heauens, the earth, and the things that be in them, haue no small worke in hande. Come to these which search to knowe the nature & properties of all creatures, where shall they ever come to see towarde an ende of their tra-uaile? They be in a bottomlesse sea with out shoare. How must those studie, how many histories, volumes, & bookes, must they turne ouer, which will come to bee sound Politikes, to be furnished for the gouernment of Cities and Common-wealthes, and for the warres? Looke vnto all others which trauaile in any sciente, and the paines of such as will excell in daede, are wonderfull. Here is trauaile, here is care, here is indignation, here is wearines and grefe vpon grefe, here is no ende, here is no perfection attayned, here is no setling or quieting of þ minde, all doeth vanish as smoke, there remayneth no good at all.

Thus we see the sentence of the wise man himselfe, concerning all the skil and knowlidge vnder the sunne. I knowe  
flesh

## The second Sermon.

flesh and bloud will here rise vp . Wis-  
dome will not suffer this disgrace , but  
will pleade for her selfe.

First it will be objected, that this is a  
weak reason, there is no wisdome attay-  
ned vnto but with sorowes , therefore  
wisdome is vanitie , and vexation of spi-  
rite . Men may goe through infinite la-  
bours and greeves willingly, to enjoy so  
precious a ie well . Their laboures are  
wel spent, they be fully recompenced . To  
haue the estimation and hono<sup>r</sup> of a wise  
man, is no small benefite . Knowledge  
filleth the minde with delight , so that it  
forgetteth the sorowes sustayned in tra-  
uayling.

I answere, that there are no labours,  
nor sorowes sustained for true felicity,  
which can any thing impaire the same,  
the ioy of that will surmount them all: it  
is most happie labour that is so spent.  
But in these things there is no true ioy,  
but a shadow . It is the loue of vainglory  
that hath caried me forward to take such  
paines , and so soze to vexe and torment  
themselues . All their ioy and comfort re-

llyth

doeth in this, that they may haue fame & glorie in this worlde. If this gloriy bee vaine and transitorie, how doth it recom-  
pence their labours and greffes? If there remaine no good, is not all vanitie, & vex-  
ation of spirite?

Let vs examine it in some particu-  
lars. Cicero and Demosthenes were elo-  
quent Oratours; how wise, and how sweet  
was their speech? They could delight the  
ear, and perswade the minde. But can  
their eloquence now perswade, to haue  
their tormentes mitigated, or to be let out  
of the prison of hell? Alas, what can their  
smooth tonges benefit them now?  
their fame doeth them no good. Solon and  
Lycurgus could make wise lawes, and  
make men partakers of great freedomes,  
but they can purchase no infranchisement  
to them selues, from the miserable bon-  
dage of eternall destruction. Aristotle  
could dispute subtilite, let him now shew  
his cunning to acquitte himselfe. Julius  
Caesar, Scipio, and Hanniball, were ex-  
pert and valiant warriours, but what can  
their sharpe swordes helpe them nowe?

They

## The second Sermon.

They coulde ouercome men, but not di-  
vils.

We may see that all the paynes am-  
bervations to attaine worldly skil, are no  
way recompensed but utterly lost. The  
parties haue but deceived themselues  
with vaine glory and pride, they haue  
made great account of that which is no-  
thing worth. For it is not any good that  
they haue found, which made the Philo-  
sophers and great wise men so to labour,  
but an opinion that their glory shoulde  
never be darkened, & that this glory was  
the chiese thing to be sought.

It seemeth so stille vnto men, and that  
it is a most abiect nature which can not  
last it. In dede vnto such as can not sa-  
farre of, as S. Peter speaketh. 2. Pet. 1.  
but haue the beames of their sight deter-  
mined within the limites of this world,  
it must needes be all in all, and the thing  
which they doe thirst after. But if they  
could see thus farre, that all this glorie  
shall doe a man no good, when he goeth  
downe into the darke pit of hell, it woulde  
alter their minde. For he which passeth  
through

through that gate must leau his traine  
behind him, he must put of his robes of  
honour, & lay aside his weapons of war.

This will some say is nothing to the  
purpose, these were Heathen men whom  
ye haue named, they knew not God. A  
man may haue al this glory, and the glo-  
rie of heauen also, as many haue had.  
That is most true, that a man may haue  
the glory of this world, and the glory of  
heauen also, and that some haue had both,  
or else were it wide with Dauid, and So-  
lomon, & many other. But yet we must  
note this, that those be no other then as  
Heathen, which delight and glorie in the  
pompe of this world, and account them  
soules which cannot (as they say) last this  
glorie.

Lette not the wise man glorie in his  
wisedome, nor the strong man in his  
strength, nor the rich man in his riches.  
But he that glorieth, lette him glori in  
this, that he hath vnderstanding & know-  
eth me, &c. Ierem. 9. Our Saviour spea-  
keth in this wise of those which seeke the  
glorie of this world, Ioh. 5. How can ye Ioh. 5.  
believe

Ierem. 9.

## The second Sermon.

beléue which seeke glorie one of another, and seeke not the glorie which commeth of God alone: Whereby it is manifest, that such as set their hearts to seeke the honour that is of men, be Infidels. The godly men, as king Dauid and others which had the glorie of this world, made it not their delight and glorie, but gloried in the Lord. Yet it will be said, that this doctrine is absurd: For is not wisdome and knowledge in the noble Artes and Sciences, the gift of God: are they not helpe then, and furtherances to approach nearer unto God, and unto true glorie? I answere that they be good giftes of God, & where the corrupt nature of man doth not hinder, they be helps unto higher and better things.

But Solomon doth not dispute what this wisdome is in it selfe, but whether a man can attaine any true felicitie by it: which he denieth, for though it benefit a man for the present, as touching worldly cōmodities, yet it is no true good because it is transitorie & doth vanish. It is gotten with sorowes and vexations, so that

a little

a little sweet is mixed with a great deale  
of sower. It is neuer perfect, neither can  
it make that straight which is crooked. It  
is so farre from bringing a man nearer  
vnto God, that it casteth men further frō  
him, as the state of man is now. For it  
setteth vp man in pride, and to glorie in  
himselfe. It is so blind touching spiritu-  
all & heauenly mysteries, in which God  
revealeth the knowledge of himselfe vnto  
saluation, that it is not onely not capa-  
ble of them, but doth blasphemously and  
madly condemne them to be foolishnesse,  
as the holy Apostle teacheth. 1. Cor 2. 1. Cor. 2.  
reasons & cogitations which come from  
the wisdome of this world, or from the  
flesh, are compared vnto holdes and mu-  
nitions, & high things which exalt them-  
selves against the knowledge of Christ,  
which the Gospell must throw downe  
when it turneth men vnto God. 2. Cor. 10. 2. Cor. 10.

And therefore the same Apostle saith,  
that God hath made the wisdome of this  
world foolishnes: that he doth destroy the  
wisdome of this world, willing that hee  
which will be wise, become a foole, that

he

## The second Sermon.

**1.Cor. 4.** he may be wise, 1.Cor. 4. Not that a man can emptie himselfe of the wisdome that he hath attayned, or that he is to reiect it utterly: but that he must not stay vpon it, nor rest in it, nor glorie in it, nor let it blinde him: but acknowledge that there is a higher and a more excellent wisdom, even the wisdom of God, which sheweth the way vnto true blessednes. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own vnderstanding, saith the holy Ghost Prou.3. For in dede, the corrupt nature of man is made so wonderfull proud by knowledge, that it despiseth and treadeth downe the trueth. Nothing seemeth glorious or excellent vnto the wise of this sort, but their owne skil. All must be measured by that, and look what soever doeth not square with it, is condemned.

**1.Cor. 1.**

From hence it commeth, that among the prudent after the flesh, few are called to inherite the kingdome of God, as wee are taught 1.Cor 1. It is so hard a thing to bring them to be knoles.

It will be replied here againe, that this

this is more aburde then the former, namely, to confesse that euен humane iustis dome is Gods gift, a thing therefore good and commendable, and withal to affirme that it doth not bring men nearer unto God, but casteth them further back. Can a good thing be the cause of euill? I answere: that a good thing can not be blamed justly to be the cause of euill. We doe not affirme that the knowledge and skill of all that is vnder the Sunne, is in it selfe the cause that menne are caried further from God, but mans corrupt nature is the cause which doth pervert & abuse it, as it doth the best things of all vnto destruction. As for example, the law is good, Rom.7. the commandement is holy, iust, & pure, saith the Apostle. And yet it is called the ministrie of condemnation, the letter that 2.Cor.3. killeth, and the strength of sinne. Is that which is holy and ordeined for life, made sinne, or the cause of sinne, or death? Luke 1. Cor. 15. how the Apostle answereth, Rom.7. Rom.7. Sinne doth take occasion, and worketh all manner of concupiscence by the commandement.

## The second Sermon.

It tooke occasion by the law, and seduced me, and sune me. Yea, he sheweth that sinne through the law doth become out of measure sinfull. And what shall wee say further, doth not the vile nature of man abuse the grace of God it self? Why doth the Apostle say, Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. Ro. 6. Why doth he give this admonition, brethren ye are called vnto libertie, only make not your libertie an occasion to the flesh. Gal. 5. but that there is so vile corruption in men by nature, as that they will make the lesse regard of committing sinne, because sinnes are freely pardoned by the bloud of Christ. Shall we then maruaile that the wisdome of this world, though in it self good, do not bring men nearer vnto God, but carrie them further from him. Yet how will some man say?

First thus, the more a man is lifted vp in pride, & doth glorie in him selfe, the further he is remoued from God. For God abhorreth the proude, and beholdeth him a farre of, yea he doth set himselfe against

Rom.6.

against him, or resist him as sa. Peter teacheth. It is not possible for man by nature but to be puffed up, and to glorie in naturall vnderstanding. And therefore we see that men which are of great wisdome for the direction of earthly things, in lawes, in policies, and in artes, doe so much glorie in themselves as if they were the flower of men, so long as they be not regenerate. Then also they be the hardest of all other, to be brought for to yeld to the heavenly wisdome. For they be full and rich already. Who shall admonish, who shal teach, who shall instruct or controll them?

Here will great displeasure be taken. For will some wise men say, this doctrine doth tend to the destruction of all the noble sciences: for who will take the paines if he may not haue the honour? Pay to heare that they doo carrie a man further from God. It will also be the ouerthow of commonwelths. For where shall become our wise politikes, and valiant warriours? If honour be brought into contempt, then farewell al. We shal

## 8. The second Sermon.

hane none but fooles and cowardeſ. Will men aduenture their liues if it were not for glorie, wil they ſtudie if they may not hane praise? Is not this ſuch a miſchiefe as is intollerable? I anſwere, that in verie daſt, to ouerthrow common- wealths, or to deſtroy noble ſciences, is a miſchiefe intollerable. But to ſay that it will be ſo, unleſſe men may ſeke the praise and glorie of the world, is a reaſon not good among christians.

Among Turkes or Heathen where there is no other thing to lead them for- ward, it might well be allowed: among vs it is to be accounted as flat Atheiſme: we are to ſeke the glorie of God, and not vaine glorie. I may reaſon thus: If a Pagan would take ſuch paines in ſtudie, for ſkill & wiſdome, & aduēture his life in the wars for the glorie and praise of me. How much more ought a christian man, to do the like to gloriſie & ſerue his God?

1. Sam. 2. God ſaith he will honour thoſe which ho- nour him: their glorie ſhall laſt for euer. The other which ſought for to gloriſie themſelues ſhall lie couered in shame, and when

## The second Sermon. 39

when their vaine praise shall vanishe: There haue beeне men as wise and poli-  
cike for gouernment, and as valiant for  
warre as euer any other, which sought  
not the praise of men, but with true feare  
to serue and gloriſſie their God, as Ieho-  
ſua, Dauid, and Solomon, with many o-  
thers. And it is a bad mind of those which  
will not allow humilitie, because they  
ſay it maketh men fooles and cowards.

Let vs see then, when as Solomon  
doth affirme that in all the wiſdome un-  
der heauē there is no good, there is no ſe-  
licitie, there is naught but vanitie and af-  
ſolation of ſpirite, he doeth not condemne  
the ſkill of this world, but doeth ſet it in  
the due place. It is profitable for the af-  
faires of this life: it may be an handmaid  
to doo ſervice unto the true heauenly wil-  
dome. But when ſhe is ſet vp as a iudge  
and controller in heauenly matters, or  
as Hagar doth aduance her ſelſe, and de-  
ſpise Sara her Ladie, that is grievous.  
All this is wickedly performed, when  
men doe gloriſſie it, reſt in it, couet to be  
aduanced by it, despising in respect there-

## The second Sermon.

of the true knowledge of God. And herein behold the wickednesse of men : the knowledge of Philosophie and worldy wisdome is so highly esteemed , and so bewtifull and precious in their eies, that they haue more delight in it by many de- grees , then in the heauenly knowledge. This doeth appere by their studies.

How swete unto them are Tullies o-  
rations , and Aristotels politikes , when  
as the Psalmes of Dauid, the Proverbes of  
Solomon, or Paules Epistles, are but as  
drie chips. These are neglected, there is  
no pain or trauaile vndertakē about them,  
there is no sweetnesse in them. About the  
other so; the wisdome of this world, there  
is unspeakable toile . Booke vpon booke,  
volumes vpon volumes, studie vpon stu-  
die, and happie men if they can so come to  
excell in some one thing. For why? they  
suppose, they haue gotten feathers of gold  
to make them goodly wings for to mount  
aloft in this world. For the wealth and  
glory of this woldē is in their eye, the  
chiefe matter.

Alas poore haire men , that they had  
the

## The second Sermon. — 40

the wisdom to consider well what is here spoken, Vanitic of vanities, all is vanitie: yea euē wisdome it selfe. For it bringeth much sorowe both to body & mind, and can but aduance in this worlde, the shape of which passeth away. It would make them alter their Studies, and desuide them so, that their cheare laboures would be for the heauenlie wisdom. For beholding the vanitie of all the glory under the sunne, it would cause them to set their hearts vpon the true glorie, and to seek for it ten times more carefully then for that. Which the Lord geue his grace to doe, Amen.

### *The end of the second*

sermon.



sermon.



## The thirde Sermon.

### Ecclesiastes. Chap. 2.



Said in my heart, goe to now, I will powre foorth with mirth, therefore take thou pleasure in that that is pleasant, But behold also, this is vanitie.

2 I said of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth, what is it that she doeth?

3 I sought in my minde to draw out my flesh in wine, and leading my heart in wisdome, and to take holde of follie, vntill I sawe whether this be the good to the sonnes of men, which they are to doe vnder the heauens, the number of the dayes of their life.

4 I made my works great, I built me houses, I planted me vineyarde.

5 I made me gardens, and orchardes, in

### The third Sermon. 41

in which I planted trees of all manner of  
fruite.

6 I made me cisterns of water, to wa-  
ter therewith the wood, springing vp  
with trees.

7 I gate me menseruants, and maide-  
seruants, and had children borne in the  
house: also, I had possession of cattle, &  
flockes, great aboue all that were be-  
fore me in Ierusalem.

8 I heaped vp for me also siluer and  
golde, and the peculiar of kings, and of  
the prouinces: I gate me men singers,  
and women singers, the delightes of the  
childe of men, all manner of harmony.

9 And I was great, and increased a-  
bove all that were before me in Ierusa-  
lem: also, my wisdome did abide with  
me.

10 And whatsoeuer mine eyes desi-  
red, I withheld it not from them, I kept  
not back my hart from any ioy, but my  
heart rejoyced ouer all my labour, and  
this was my portion of all my trauel.

11 I looked then vnto al the workes  
which my hands had wrought, and vn-

## The third Sermon.

to the trauaile in which I trauailed to  
doe, and behold, all is vanitie, and vexa-  
tion of spirite, and there is no profit vn-  
der the sunne.

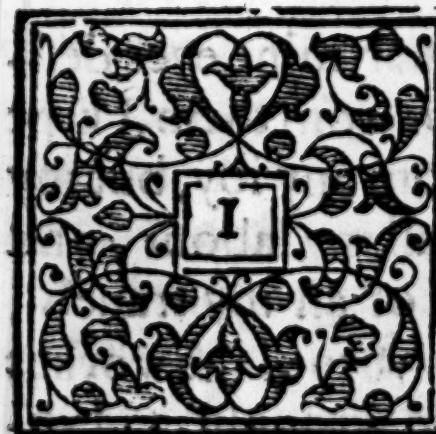
12 Then I turned to beholde wis-  
dome, and extreme madnes and follic,  
for, what shall the man doe that shal fo-  
low the king? euen that which is done  
alreadie.

13 I saw that there is profite in wis-  
dom more then in folly, as there is pro-  
fite in light aboue the darke.

14 The wise mans eyes are in his  
head, but the fool walketh in the darke.



## Ecclesiastes. Chap. 2.



Saide in my heart,  
goe to now, &c.  
We haue alreadie  
saene in the former  
Chapter, that So-  
lomon, first of all,  
searched out wis-  
dom,

## The third Sermon. 42

dome, and found no good therein, but sor-  
rowes. Now therfore, he turneth to seek  
ell where. And first vnto pleasures, which  
he staieth not in, but by and by detesteth.  
And so he cometh to a third course, which  
is this. He mixeth wisdome and pleasures  
together. But he doeth conclude, that al-  
though he found in this way some good  
in both, yet not such, but that he sawe all  
to be vanitie, and vexation of spirit. For  
the good he founde, is but for the present  
time.

But let vs come to his words for that  
former, he stirreth vp himselfe vnto de-  
lights and pleasures, to see whether ther  
be in them the felicitie that me shall haue  
vnder the heauens. And to the ende we  
may understande that he searched euuen  
to the bottome of al pleasures & delights,  
he vseth a speech to expresse the same as  
vehemently as might be. For hee doeth  
not say, I wil geue my selfe to pleasure,  
which might be done with some modera-  
tion, and so he shoulde not search deepe e-  
nough: but he saith, I will powre foorth  
with pleasure; that is, he wil wholly give  
over,

### The third Sermon.

ouer, or power forth himself, or his hart  
vnto pleasure. And so he willeth his hart  
(euen as it were letting loose al þ raines)  
to take pleasures in that which is pleasant.  
This is very needefull to be considered,  
because our nature is addicted vnto de-  
lights and pleasures, and men do greatly  
couet them, imagining that there is feli-  
citie in them, they be so swete vnto the  
flesh.

If Solomon had but fasted, or vsed  
moderation in pleasures, we might haue  
said, what can he tel how great good there  
is to be found in delights? But when he  
poured forth, and gaue ouer him selfe  
whollie (for the time) vnto them, what  
doubt remayneth, or can remaine? He  
was a great king, wanting nought, but  
hauing at wil and commandement what  
he would for all lawfull delights. No o-  
ther king in the world able to doe þ like.  
He put forth himselfe, & did what might  
be done. And now hauing proued, marks  
what he saith: Beholde, this also is va-  
nitie.

He stayeth not here, in pronouncing  
all

all carnall delights and pleasures to bee  
vanitie, but sheweth also, that he did euē  
loath them with contempt and indigna-  
tion.

I said (saith he) of laughter, it is mad,  
and of mirth, what doeth she? Being  
marueylous wise, it greued him exce-  
dingly to be carried so farre awrie, and  
out of the way, as to be made a fole, a  
mad man, or a beast. Nowe he saw that  
pleasures, ( which he understandeth by  
laughter ) doe in daede make those euē  
brutish, and madfoles, which are geuen  
ouer unto them. That is the cause why  
he saith laughter is mad, which is not to  
be vnderstoode only what it is in it selfe,  
but what it maketh men. It carieth men  
which are poured forth thereunto, euē  
to the forgetfulnes of God, and to quēch  
all light of true vnderstanding in them.  
Thus then he reasoneth: felicity, or good,  
is not to be sought in that which maketh  
a man forget God, quencheth the light of  
reason, turneth him into a beast, or ma-  
keth him mad. But carnall pleasures do  
all these, when a man doeth poure forth  
him

### The third Sermon.

him selfe vnto them, therefore they are to be despised, abhored, and reiected.

A wise man may wel say of mirth as he doeth: what doeth she? as if it should be said, she doeth marre al, leadeth cleane awry, and leaueth no good. In this point there is little credite giuen, or like to begin vnto Solomon. For almost the whole world doth giue ouer it selfe vnto vaine mirth and pleasures. There is such a sweetnesse in them vnto the flesh, that ye shall scarce find the tenth man, among noble or base, which doth not thinke himselfe euuen after a soþt happie, if he may enjoy euuen the scumme or dregges of them.

I speake thus, because in comparison of Solomons pleasant delights, all the pleasures which the common soþt of men attaine vnto, are but euē as the scumme. And what is the cause that we can not belieue him, but do still follow after carnall pleasures, as greedily as euer hungry fishes do catch at the bait? Surely this is the cause, men are fooles, and so it greeueth them not to be made beastes or madde

madde men, as it greued him being wise: Is this the way to happinesse? O miserable blindnes. Men are now (as the holy Apostle prophecie, they should be in the last daies) louers of pleasures, more then louers of God. 2. Timoth. 3. Let vs 2. Tim. 3. take heed of it, seing it is but a vaine illusion, and no more but as the dreame of a sick man. He dreameith that he seeth pleasant sights, & heareth goodly songs which delight him, but when he awaketh, he is in his bed full of paine: pleasures for the time carrie men on as happie, but in the end they shall find they were deluded.

I may here reason by comparison after this sort: If lawfull mirth or that which is indifferent in it selfe, do make men to become madde and base minded, when they be given ouer thereunto, not keeping moderation, for power forth thy selfe and thou shalt become madde, how much more shall filthie and unlawfull, or impure delights make them brutish? for we must not thinke that king Solomon did poure forth himselfe unto vncleane mirth: but unto such pleasures as are  
deemed

### The third Sermon.

deemed honest. And they that are carried away with these become madde, and base minded, their felicitie being all one with the beasts. Then wee know not whereunto for to like those which make a sport of sinne, and sport themselues with wickednesse. Some of them delight in pride, painting forth theselues by all the waies and meanes which they can, that they may seeme godly in the eyes of men. Others follow gluttonie and drunkennes, cramming and stuffing their bellies like swine. Others solace theselues in whoredome & uncleanness, these be their sweet delights. Solomon did not gine himselfe to such pleasures.

These be more then madde, for they drinke in poison only because it is sweet, euен the most pestilent and deadly poison and bane, both of soule & body: therefore it is said, the foole maketh a sporte of sinne. Moses is commended for great

Hebr 11. wisdom, Hebr. 11. When he did refus to be called the sonne of Pharoes daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures

sures of sinne for a season, esteeming the rebuke of Christ greater riches, then the treasures of Egypt. I would all kings, princes, nobles, & great men of the earth, did know that which king Solomon doth teach in this place. Yea I would all men did consider it a right. Then shuld we not haue the devisers of vaine delights so much made of, wee shold not haue so much cost & so much time spent in vaine mirth.

Hebr. 11.

I will now procede vnto that which doth follow, beyng the third search that he made to find good. He saith he tooke vpon him to drawe forth his flesh in wine (that is to my swete delights and pleasures) for wine being one of the chief delicates, is as a parte vised for the whole. But he would doe this (as he saith) leading his hart in wisdome and taking hold of follie. That is he will ioyne wisdome and delights together. The studie of wisdome did carrie with it as much increase of indignation and sorrow, as of knowledge, so the moze knowledge, the more sorrow, and being transitorie how shold

### The third Sermon.

it bring felicitie or good , yea euен for the  
time present felicity, as was said before,  
is a swaete thing, it is not in grieses and  
veratiōs . To come then vnto pleasures,  
there may be felicitie in them , for they  
are swaete & delicate, they bring delight.  
He poureth forth his heart vnto them,  
they make him madde. If felicitie be to be  
found in brutish madnesse , they can af-  
ford it.

Whether shall he seeke now, he hath  
failed in these two former : he doth ther-  
fore take a third course, and doth make a  
mixture, and ioyne them both together.  
The pleasures & delights shall asswage,  
and delay the sorowes which goe with  
the increase of wisdome : and so the bit-  
ternes of them shall not be felt . Againe,  
wisdome shall be as a bridle to moderate  
the pleasures, to auoid the foolish madnes,  
which other wise they do bring . So that  
now he goeth about to proue what is in  
these , when both those former euils are  
salued . He will neither be besotted, or  
made a brutish foole by the one , neither  
tormented by sorowes with the other.

Here

Here ye see a most excellent wise way; and in deede as we shall see aftewards, y good that is to be found is in this course.

It may be said, that he, ioyning them thus together, the one might be an impediment to the other. For either his abundant wisdome would not suffer him to take pleasure (filling him full of morositi) or else his great pleasures could not but carrie him awrie from wisdomes loue: therefore marke what he saith, for in deede neither of them hindred the other. His pleasures should be to the full, and wheras he professeth, for he would draw out or continue his flesh in wine, that is in delights. He would also lead his heart in wisdome, and take hold of follie, then pleasure shall not make him madde: we haue seene before why this is added, that hee would take hold of follie.

And so here he doth let vs understand, that in both these together he waded deepli, yea most deepli, vntill (as he saith) he might see whether this be the good that the sonnes of men are to ijoy vnder the heauens, the number of the daies of their

24  
The third Sermon.

life, whether a man may find good vnder  
the heauens in wisedome, and delights  
mixed together?

Thus having declared the purpose of  
his minde, he sheweth how he did prac-  
tise the same. For loke what serued for  
honour, for royltie, and magnificencie, he  
set it vp. Nothing was omitted which  
might minister comfort and ioy, in law-  
full and honest delightes. Wisedome also  
shewed her selfe euery where in all his  
labours. For, according to the power of  
a king, and the same the greatest in glo-  
rie, riches, and wisedome vnder heauen,  
he made his wo:kes great and magnifi-  
call. He did builde faire and stately Pa-  
laces, godly houses, none such (in euerie  
respect) to be seene in the world. He plan-  
ned vineyarde, he made him gardens &  
orchards, in which he planted al manner  
of fruitful treas, euen of all the best fruits  
that could be gotten in the earth. Into  
these the pleasant sweet streams of fresh  
waters, were deuided by conductes, or  
pipes, into cisterns, for to water the treas  
and plants.

He

He had (as he saith) great riches, aboue all that were before him in Jerusalem, He had a great familie, of men seruants, maidseruants, and children born of them in the house. He had store of cattle, as, of shæpe and oren. He heaped vp golde and siluer, & the peculiar treasures of kinges, and of the prouinces: euē such treasures as none but kings and potentates are able to possesse, for the great priue of them.

Furthermore, he had the sweetest me-  
lodie that might be: for he had men sin-  
gers, and wome singers, and (as he saith)  
the delights of the children of men, all  
maner of muscall harmonie: which is  
translated in our english bible, a woman  
taken captiue, & women taken captiues.  
The words be Schiddah, and Schiddoth  
Now, Schadad is to spoyl and lay waste,  
but here it is vnsitly taken in that sence,  
of a womā, or women take captiues. He  
spake of men singers, and wome singers,  
and ther no doubt hee addeth the musike  
of the instrumentes, which was vsed to-  
gether with their voice. And to note that

### The third Sermon.

He had not common musike, he saith, the delights of the children of men, harmonie, and harmonies: as inuch as to say, all maner of harmonie, and noyses of musike, the sweetest instruments that might be, being toyned together. And the words whiche he useth, doo very fitly expresse the matter, because in the harmonie of musike, many diuers soundes meeting together, are (as it were) wasted eache of other, and doe make all one tune. And so he calleth it Schiddah, and Schiddoth.

Thus we may see, that there was nothing vnder the heauens, either beutifull vnto the eye, sweete and pleasant to the taste, or delightsome vnto the eare, but he had it. And for the same purpose he tellicheth moze then once, I was great, and increased aboue all that were before mee in Ierusalem. But doeth he (as he purposed) enjoy pleasures, and yet lead his hart in wisdome, for that is the thing he professed to undertake. He affirmeth that he did. His delights did not carie him into foolish madnes, for he saith, verse 10, yet my wisdom did abide still with mee.

But

# The third Sermon. 48

But did not his wisdome withhold him from taking solace? In no wise, for hee saith, All that mine eyes desired, I kept not back from them, I withheld not my hart from any joy. Behold then, as hee purposed, so daeth he bring to passe. Hee iwyneth wisdome and delights together. Mirth and laughter shall not make him mad. He wil not so forget himselfe, to be caried with sensualitie and voluptuousnes, as to be made a beast. His wisdome did still continue with him, and guide his heart.

Againe, he did not bere himselfe with indignation and sorrow, for the multiplying of knowledge, and so withdrawe himselfe from pleasures. For, whatsoeuer his eye desired, whatsoeuer his heart wished for in any lawfull mirth, he was able to haue what he woulde, he did not denies the same.

See then how he was listed vp touching all the excellent thinges vnder the sonne. He did flow, and swim in wealth, in pleasures, in honour, and wisdome. He had al that hart can wish. If these things

### The third Sermon.

be able to relēue, or to easē mans miserie, he is happy by them. He wanteth not, nor is not scanted. Let all kings and princes now looke vpon him, and harken what he saith, for he commieth now to tel what he found in all these.

He confesseth in dede, that in this way he received commoditie. And first touching the delights, that he withheld not his heart from any ioy. He saith it was his portion of all his labour. Wherby he doeth vs to witte, that there is no more to be had but for a temporall profite. He is to haue but his part, and then when he hath lefte all behinde, another doeth take his part: and so along stil from one to another. There is no man which will maintayne, that after death any one is the better for the delights which he liued in. For the present time there is profite, being vsed in such sort, as that they doe not quench the light of the mind, and downe it in securitie, and other filthie sinnes. For God hath geuen men y lawfull use of his creatures, not onely for necessitie, but also for delight and pleasure.

As he hath appointed that we shall labor and trauaile, so also we are to take parte of our labors, it is our portion vnder the sunne. But withall wee must obserue, that when he saith, this is my portion of all my labor, he doeth speake as of a sinal thing, and not to be wayed or esteemed as the cheefe and principal matter which man is to seek. For it is as if he had said, my labors are great, I haue no more for my portion but delight and pleasure for the time.

For when hee doeth well way what this portion is, he maketh it nothing. He had as much ioy and pleasure as could be had in all earthly creatures: and doeth he say, Haue I no more for my portion but this? Doeth he make so light of the matter? There be multitudes, which if they could come but vnto the tenth part of his glorie, riches, and pleasures, wolde not set so light by them. They would thinke their labours wel bestowed, and take the selues very happie men, if they might but swel themselues in the dreggs of those pleasures which he did swim in. If some man

### The third Sermon.

man had but one of his goodly houses , it would cause him to looke aloft.

It sheweth that this noble king had a farre better sight, to discerne and iudge of these earthly thinges , then men commonly haue. For the world is blinde, and countes it gaine to liue deliciously for a season. He saith in the next wordes, I looked vnto all my works which my hands had done, and vnto the labour which I had trauailed for to doe, and behold, all is vanitie, and vexation of spirite . and there is no profite vnder the sunne.

Then we see, his portion was not such, but that all stil was vanitie . A worthy thing to be considered of all men, that he could enjoy to the ful the good which is to be found in all things vnder heauen, and yet see so cleer that all is vanitie, and vexation of spirite, and no profite at all. For he dooth now speake of some profit which remayneth. Then we might see by him, that if we had our portion in all the best things vnder the sunne , yet it shall not make vs one iotte the neerer vnto happiness: yet foolish people will say, he hath all things

things at will, he is happy.

Let vs here make comparison. The great magnificall workes of king Solomon, with all his roialtie, and glori, and pleasures, are vanitie, and vexation of spirite. What is then to be thought of the workes of meaner persons, yea, let it bee euen of kings? Their workes are not comparable vnto his. All his haue vanished, and shall not theirs? He founde no good, and shall they finde any? Behold then, a man set vp in the height and toppe of all excellencie for this wrold, who also ha- ving made search euery way to the full, to finde good, doeth proclaime, and cry out aloud vnto all other whom he beholdeth from aloft, stryuing below, and labouring themselues euene out of breath, to clime vp vnto him, that they doe but lose their labour, and wearie themselues in vaine. For when they haue gotten euen to the highest degree of wealth, of dignitie, and pleasures, they shall finde naught but mere vanitie. There is no credite geuen vnto this, which sheweth, that the worldlings are too too shamefully be- sotted

### The third Sermon.

softed and bewitched, for they labour as earnestly to clime aloft in the worlde, as if the fulnes of ioy and felicitie were therby to be attained. They haue nothing the like care to seeke the kingdome of God, where indeed alone is the true blessednes. They spill both bodie and soule, to come by that which can doe them no good at all. They builde their houses in bloud, in craft and deceite, with briberie, extortiōn, yea with all maner of vniust dealing, haue they increased their riches.

If they coulde rise vp as lawfully as Solomon, it were much neerer, yet all vanitie. What is their miserie then, which they haue doubled by their wicked couetousnes, and ambition? If they looke to goe beyonde Solomon, they be madde; If they looke to be equall with him, they be fōles, they shall never come nigh him by many degrēes. If they thinke to find god, then it must be in the scraps, where as he could never finde, but denieth it to be in the full furniture of the table.

This might stay our course when we runne

# The third Sermon. 51

runne so grēdily and ambitiously after the world. If we had the grace and wisdom but to be thinke vs, that we are told by one which hath proued that all is but labour lost. We run frō God whom we should seeke and stay vpon: and follow after that which can not helpe vs at all. We leane vpon a broken stafte and stay vpon a reed. If God giue vs riches and honor, vse them to his glorie, account of them as things transitorie. We must set our hearts vpon better things. If I could be equall with Solomon in glorie and royltie, I perceiue by him it were nought worth. Why shold I depriue my self of þe ioies of heauen, by a likerousnes of that which is utterly vaine? I can not serue God and Mammon. I can not delight in this world, and delight in God also. He that doth but desire to be rich falleth into many noysome lustes, which drawne men in destrucciō and perdition.

I will first, as I am commaunded, seeke the kingdome of God, and his righteousnesse. I will not labour for þe meat which perisheth, but for the meate which indu-  
reth

1.Tim.6.

## The third Sermon.

reth vnto eternall life. Unto this I say  
we be admonished.

Then to conclude this point, I wish  
that kings,princes,nobles,rich men, and  
all other would take the vew of Solo-  
mons workes : his stately palaces, his  
pleasant gardens, and orchyards, his gold  
and siluer, with al his hono:rs & delights:  
and with all marke wel and beleue that  
he saith, all is vanitie and vexation of  
spirit, there is no profit vnder the sun.  
This would do them much good: they  
should not be drowned and swallowed vp  
in earthly cares and pleasures. Now he  
cometh to the other part. I turned (saith  
he) to behold wisdome, and madnesse,  
and follie. It may be demaunded, did he  
not behold wisdome before, comparing  
her with madnesse and follie, why doeth  
he then now turne to behold her againe?  
He did behold wisdome before, and did  
search her out by her selfe, & found much  
indignation and sorrow. Now he doeth  
behold what commoditie he received by  
her beyng mixed with delights, she gui-  
ding his hart through pleasures. And be-  
cause

# The third Sermon. 52

cause he speaketh of euery thing so resolutely, before he do proceede any further, he preventeth an obiection, for it might be said, who is Solomon that we should stand to his sentence, is his experience so perfect aboue all others?

To this he maketh answere, what shall the man do which shall follow the king: that is, which will search out matters which he hath searched. And he addeth, euen that which they haue done alreadie. But the phrase of the Hebrew tongue doth beare to say, euē that which is done already. As if he should say, let any man what soever he be vnder heauen, take vpon him to follow me, and to make triall in any one thing, he shall not go beyond me, he shal do no more then I haue already done. When he saith who is the man, it is to shewe that he is not to be found. All kings, princes, rich and wise men in the earth ioyning together can not match him. God made him euē for the purpose, such as hee never made any before nor after him.

Then I saw (saith he) that there is profit

### The third Sermon.

profit in wisdome, more then in follie: as there is profit in light more then in darknesse. The wise mans eyes are in his head, but the foole walketh in the darke. He shewed before that to take delight in his trauaile (his hart beyng guided in wisdome) had some commoditie in it, but yet all vanitie, it was but his portion for the present time. So now he declareth that he did also find profit in wisdome being thus tempered, neuerthelesse all is but vanitie, as he sheweth by reasons.

But first see, how he doth lay open the commoditie of wisdome aboue follie, by a comparison. It is so much more beneficall and good, as the light is aboue the darkenesse: compare then these two, the light and the darkenesse, and ye haue the difference of the other. It is not in every mans power to match wisdome and follie together, for how shall men iudge of that which they know not, nor never saw: they are acquainted with follie, but wisdome is hid from them. For this cause he giueth a rule which is common. All men can tell what profit there is in light about

aboue darknesse. And hee sheweth that thereby wee may take a iust measure what profit there is in wisdome more then in follie, when he saith it is as in the light aboue the darkenesse. Well then let vs hold vs to the rule, which he giueth to take the true measure and to scanne this matter withall: because there is no man that possesseth wisdome: but some hath one peice, and some an other moze then the common sort.

But we inioy the light and are deprivued thereof oftentimes by the darke: this is common to the fole and to the wise. He that walketh in the light doth not stumble, for it sheweth him his way. He that goeth in the darke knoweth not whether he goeth, he steppeth into the ditch. The light is comfortable, and sheweth unto a man many chearefull and delightsome things. Darkenesse is dolefull and uncomforable, couering the bewtie of all goodly things, when a man is in the middest of them. By the light men see to order their woorke and do it well: In the darke they can do nothing but marre that

**H** they

## The third Sermon.

they take in hand.

W<sup>e</sup> see that the eyes are y<sup>e</sup> light of the bodie, they be placed abone in the head as in a watch tower, and so behold round about and a farre of. If there be any good to be gotten they shew where the way lieth toward it. If any daunger approach, they tell how to shunne and auoid the same. To this he cōpareth the wisdome of the wise, whē he saith, the wise mans eyes are in his head, but he likeneth a foole to a blind man: the foole (saith he) doth walke in darknesse. Then we may see his minde is this, a wise man touching y<sup>e</sup> matters of this w<sup>or</sup>ld (for he speake<sup>t</sup>h here but of the worldly wisdome, which can see no iotte beyond worldly af<sup>fa</sup>ires) hath his skill and knowledge for a light, even, as y<sup>e</sup> eies be in a mans head.

The benefit hereof is such, that it o<sup>r</sup>di<sup>n</sup>eth all his waies. He doth eschew dangers, mischiefs, inconueniences, and euer y<sup>e</sup> hurtfull thing. He procureth cōmodities on all sides. He hath delight & pleasure in the worke of his hands. The foole is blind, & if he haue not one which hath eies

# The third Sermon. 54

eies to lead him , falleth into the ditch on  
every side : he dasheth his head against e-  
very post : he wrappeth himselfe among  
bushes and briers, and is rent and torne :  
If he struggle out, he is neuer the neare,  
because he is by and by in new dangers.  
Thus we may see what is the profite of  
wisdome aboue follie . Let vs note here  
then first , that Solomon doeth not con-  
demne humane wisdome , but commen-  
deth it as a thing profitable , when it is  
rightly vsed, as conteyning it selfe with-  
in the compasse of worldy matters . For  
when she medleth with heauenly & spiri-  
tuall thinges, she is aboue her reach, shē  
doth steppe out of her owne shēp : though  
she be as a clēre eye for this present  
world , yet for heauenly things shē is  
starke blinde, and a very madde bedlem,  
condemning the wisdome of God & spiri-  
tuall mysteries to be follie , because they  
agree not with her .

Let vs also marke in this place , that  
it is little maruaile, though the wise men  
of this world make wonderfull account  
of their wisdome : they take pleasure in

## The third Sermon.

the commodities which they reape there-  
by. They laugh sliie to see others in the  
briers and plagued through their follie.  
But this is aboue their skill, and herein  
they erre, that when a man for to keepe a  
good cōscience, falleth into dāgers & mis-  
ries in this wōrld, they iudge him a fōle.  
All their wisdom is to keep this wōrld, the  
losse of it they esteem madnes. It is far of  
frō the wisdome of flesh & bloud to teach a  
mā to deny himself, to renounce þ wōrld,  
and to take vp his crosse. And this is the  
only way vnto trus blessednesse.

Math.16.

For the sonne of God said, that such as  
will be his disciples, must doe that. Math.  
16. The great wise men of this wōrld,  
whose wisdome doeth abound and ouer-  
flow, even as the waters in the sea, de-  
lighting in the excellencie of things pre-  
sent, do together with the foolish, hate and  
persecute extremely Christes true disci-  
ples. For the wisdome of the flesh is en-  
mitie against God: Because it is not sub-  
iect vnto the law of God, neither in deede  
can be. Rom.8. God doth destroy the wis-  
dome of this wōrld. 1. Cor.1. He hath gi-  
uen

Rom.8.

1. Cor.1.

# The third Sermon. 55

uen Christ to be our wisdom: and in him  
are all the treasures of wisdom & know-  
ledge. Col. i. His doctrine destroyeth that Col. i.  
wher in the wise do most glory, and ther-  
fore they do account it most absurd. Few  
such wise men are called to be partakers  
of Gods glory. 1. Cor. i. they follow the 1. Cor. i.  
world, they heape vp riches, they seeke  
countenance and glorie.

Moreover, we must beware that we  
do not misunderstand Solomon in this  
place, when he doth speake of wisdom,  
comparing her to the light, & to the eyes  
in the head. We may not iudge that he  
doth speake this of craft and subtiltie, but  
of such knowledge as is good in it selfe,  
and in the right use doth bring commodi-  
tie: now adies, though there be fewe  
wise men (for it is attained with great &  
long trauaile) yet there be many that  
thinke themselves wise, and are offended  
if men do not so darne them. When as  
in daede the greatest part of their wis-  
dom, doth rest in a naughtie dissembling  
craftines and falsehood. They haue no skil  
in good sciences, and yet because they can

## The third Sermon.

With subtil shiftes and very cousening  
tricks ouer reach other, they glory much,  
and take themselves to be the onely poli-  
tikes of the world. These men are none  
of those of whom he speaketh, when he  
saith, the wise mans eyes are in his head,  
this kind of skill is gotten without sore  
trauaile and sorrow. It is an easie thing  
for mans corrupt natur to put in prac-  
tise this diuelish art: who can not faine,  
lie, and dissemble?

Well, these are to be put out of the number, and sent among the scoules, least they might glorie, and say, we be the men of whom Solomon doeth speake: We haue our eyes in our head. No, no, your subtle wittines is oftentimes a snare or a nest, a pit, or a trap to catch your selues. Hee catcheth the wise in their craftiness. Cor. viii. 12. 3701 109 (allured and  
so) Moreover, we may learn this in continuall experience, that a man whose policy is craft, is suspected in all his doings, and thought to dissemble, even when he meaneth shaplie, and without fraud. Away then all dissembling and false, not wise men,

## The third Sermon. 56

men, but foyles. We wil replie, that there is such dæpe craft and dissimulation now practised in the world, that (vnles a man doe meete with it with the like) he shall never goe through. For some are not ashamed to say, that he which will liue in these dayes, must dissemble, and vse craft for priuate affaires, and for publike busines in gouernment of commonwelths, if a man do not vse craft, if he do not faine and dissemble, he shalbe made a foole, he must studie with subtiltie to repell subtiltie, and so fashion hymselfe to the manners of the world.

Alas, is wisdome become so weake, that she cannot defende her selfe against falshode? Certainly, there is no false packing in the worlde, but wisdome is able both to espie it, and to encounter it. Make a difference therefore (my brethren) betwixt these sortes of men. Count not the wisdome of this worlde to be fraude and guile, No; it is simple and plaine, the other is but the abuse thereof.

Thus farre haue we seene what Solomon found in pleasures and wisdom to i-

### The third Sermon.

ned together, and in all his royll & magnificall workes, which served for honour and delight. There doe remaine the reasons which he bringeth to prove that notwithstanding the good that ensueth frō either, yet all is vanitie in both. I will not now deale with them, but if it please God, the next time.

Lay vp I pray you (brethren) in your hearts, his doctrine here uttered. Meditate alone by your selues upon his glory, riches, and delights. Consider his great workes, and his wisdom, and remember wel what he found in them all. Be not so vnwise, as to imagine ye can goe beyonde him, yea or to come any thing neare to that he has. Strive not to clime aloft, supposing ye shall be better then belowe. But remember how he crieth out vnto you from aloft, affirming that ye doe but lose your labou, and torment your selues in vaine. If ye doe this diligently, ye shal not be like the miserable worldlings, for of all men they be miserable, which coust to be rich, and set vp in the world. The Lord blesse your meditatio herin. Amen.

The end of the third Sermon.



## The fourth Sermon.

### Ecclesiastes. Chap. 2.



Know also that one condition befalleth to them all. *1* Therefore I said in my heart, it befalleth vnto me as it befalleth to the foole, why then doe I labour to be more wise. And I said in my heart, that this also is vanitie. *2* For there shalbe no remembrance of the wise, and of the foole for euer: for in the dayes that shall come, all that is now shalbe forgotten, and how dieth the wise with the foole. *3* Therefore I hated life, because the worke which is wrought vnder the Sun, seemed euill vnto me; for all is vanitie, and vexation of spirite.

## The fourth Sermon.

18 I hated also my labour, in which I laboured vnder the sunne: for I shall leaue it to the man that shall bee after me.

19 And who knoweth whether hee shalbewise, or a foole, and yet shall hee rule ouer all my labour, wherein I haue laboured, and wherin I haue shewed my selfe wise vnder the sunne, this also is vanities. ~~shall god noisib~~

20 Therfore I turned away, to make my heart to be without hope, concerning all the labour wherein I haue traualied vnder the sunne. ~~ed 31 28 30 31  
ba 21~~

21 For there is a man whose labour is in wisedome, and in knowledge, and equitie: and to a man that hath not laboured therein must hee geue his portion, this also is vanitie; and a great eni.

22 For what hath a man of all his trauaile, and greefe of heart, wherein he hath traualied vnder the sunne?

23 For all his dayes are sorowes, and his trauaile greefe: his heart also taketh no rest in the night, this also is vanitie.

24 There is no good to a man, but

that he eate and drinke, and delight his soule with the profite of his labour . I saw also this, that this is of the hande of God.

25 For who coulde eate , and who could haft vnto outwarde thinges more than I ?

26 For, to a man that is good in his sight, God geueth wisdom, knowledge, and ioy : but to the sinner hec geueth paine, to gather, and to heape vp, and to geue to him which is good before God. This also is vanitie, and vexation of spi-  
rite.

## Ecclesiastes: Chap. 2.



Know also , &c. In the former part of this Chapter , we haue seene how hee searched for good in pleasures and wil-  
dome mixed toge-  
ther,

## The fourth Sermon.

ther, and in all excellent and magnificall  
worke, which serued for either of them.  
We haue also heard what profit he found  
this way.

Now commeth he to shew by reasons  
why yet all is vanitie, and first for wis-  
dome. It hath profite in it aboue follie, as  
much as the light hath aboue darkenesse:  
but yet there remayneth no good by it.  
For the light of the sunne which we doe  
now enjoy, doeth serue but for the pre-  
sent use. For when death commeth, and  
the eyes be cloased vp, what good remay-  
neth, can it make a man happy? Euen so  
is it with humane wisdome, it doeth a  
man much good for a little time: but af-  
terward, as the blind man, and he which  
hath his eyes, are made alike: so the wise  
and the fool meete together, and are made  
equall in one condition. For that reason  
he bringeth, I knowe also (saith he) that  
one condition befalleth to them all. If  
all the wisdome vnder the sunne can ad-  
uance the possessor thereof no more, but  
that he must meete in the selfe same con-  
dition with the fool, yea euen with the  
most

most dullarde which liueth, what profit  
doeth remaine?

See I pray you, how hee reasoned in  
himselfe about this poynt, I saide in my  
heart, it befalleth to me as it befalleth to  
the foole, why then doe I labour to bee  
more wise? I said in my heart, that this  
also is vanitie. What a godly gifte was  
this: yea, what a grace of god in him, that  
he could in his mind haue this considera-  
tion: it came not from the wisdom of flesh  
and bloud, for that doeth blinde men, and  
pusse them vp in a vaine opinion. They  
imagine themselves to be petie Gods in  
comparison of the simple meane people.  
It doeth not enter into them to say in  
their heart, what good shall all my wis-  
dome doe me? The fool shalbe in the same  
condition, the same shall befall vnto mee,  
which befalleth vnto him. Shal I glory  
in that which cannot exalt me one steppe  
aboue the poorest, the simplest, and vilest  
foole?

To what end should I labour so much  
to abound in wisdome? It is mere vani-  
tie, saing no good commeth thereby. It is  
the

## The fourth Sermon.

the best way for me to seek for that which will stick by me, and aduaunce me vnto glorie perpetuall. This wisdome perishest, and all the glorie of it doeth vanish in a moment. I say, if men had the grace to reason thus with Solomon, it were a godly matter. Some wil replie here, and say, that the wise man leaueth a fame behinde him, and is renowned for ever, and therein his condition is not all one with the foole. True it is in daede, that many wise men leauie a fame behinde them, and some fewe leauie in record such testimonie of their skill, that their praise continueth.

But alas it is so pōre a rememb'āce, and so vaine a thing, that he saith, there is no rememb'ānce of the wise, and of the foole for ever: in the daies that shal come all that is now shall be forgotten. Thus we see the wise man and the foole wrapped vnder one couerlet, ouerwhelmed in obliuion. Solomon beholding this in his mind, louing and fauoring wisdome, being himselfe very wise, and despising folie, he crieth out with great disdaine, and saith,

saith, how dieth the wise with the sole ?  
Whatsoeuer aduantage he hath in his  
life time , at his death he is made euill  
with the sole.

It may be objected , that if this be a  
sufficient reason to prove that wisdome  
is vanitie , because the wise dieth as the  
sole : then the same reason may hold a-  
gainst the true , heauenly , and spirituall  
wisdome. For the true knowledge of God ,  
and his feare do not so priuledge any  
ma , but that he dieth as others do . What  
hath the godly man at his death more th̄  
the wicked ? I answe, that here is the  
difference : the wise man for this world  
hath had all that he can haue by his wis-  
dome. It forlaketh him when death com-  
meth. There remaine no matters in the  
world that is to come , wherein he may  
employ his skill , or haue any vse of his  
knowledge. Thus doth his wisdome va-  
nish and come to an end at his death.

On the contrarie , then beginneth the  
fruit & commoditie of the heauenly wis-  
dome when a man dieth . For the know-  
ledge of God which is here but in part ,  
shall

## The fourth Sermon.

shall be perfected in the life to come, and shall never vanish. That man shall reap endlesse fruit by his wisdome. Outwardly, for his departure from this world, he differeth not from the foole, but with God there is a great difference. Having told vs how he reasoned in himselfe about the wise man & the foole, thus by death made equall, now her uttereth what effect it wrought in him. I hated life (saith he) because the worke that is done vnder the sunne seemed euill vnto me.

By this manner of speech, he declareth a wonderful misliking which he had conceived in his minde of the state of this present life: partly for that the wise and the foole end a like, and it befalleth to the one, as it befalleth to the other, and they do mēte together in an equall condition, and partly for that which followeth in this chapter. He taketh such displeasure, that it should be all one with the foole as with him, that he is wearie of his life, yea he hateth this life. For all the worke that is wrought vnder the sunne, seemed euill vnto him, because al is vanitie, and vera-

tion

## The fourth Sermon. 61

tion of the spirit. A notable place to teach  
vs whence it commeth that men can so  
well away with this present life.

If they were not fooles and blinde, if  
they had wisdome to discusse, as he doeth  
here, though they had all his glory and  
riches, they should abhorre this life and  
be discontented with it. Such as be in  
trouble and vexation, pressed with po-  
uertie and other grievances can be con-  
tent to depart: but how grievous is the  
remembrance of death vnto such as haue  
abundance and liue in pleasures? If they  
be wise in this their loue of present life,  
if they be right, Solomon was a foole, &  
went wrong out of the way, for he is of a  
contrarie minde. He saw the vanitie of  
this life to be such, that he hated life.

It may be demanded whether he did  
well in this, that he saith he hated life:  
for life in it selfe is a precious thing, it is  
Gods gift, for which we are to give him  
great thankes: and how should he say he  
hated life? We must not take it that he  
hated life it selfe, but the things which  
are annexed vnto it; as vanitie, vexation

## The fourtrh Sermon.

Ioh. 12.

of spirite and miserie. These are insepe-  
rably annexed vnto this present life, and  
therfore he nameth the life it selfe, which  
he can not inioy without these. Our Sa-  
uiour saith likewise Iohn. 12. he that los-  
ueth his life in this world shall loose it,  
and he that hateth his life, shall keepe it  
vnto eternal life. Tush wil some thinke,  
Solomon was ouer wise, his wisdome  
made him full of moxositie, it did hinder  
him.

If I had but the one halfe, or a quar-  
ter, yea the hundredth part of that which  
he had, I would liue merily, I would I  
might liue vntil I hated my life, or were  
wearie of it. To such men I say, if he  
were ouer wise, they come as far shorft.  
He had not so much, but they haue as li-  
tle. It were well for these Epicures, if  
they had some hundredth part of his wis-  
dome, with the like portio of those things  
which he possessed: which because they  
want, they are like vnto the ore which is  
fed in swaete pasture, he is wanton & kic-  
keth vp his hæles, there is no thought of  
the butchers ax. These looke for no iudge-  
ment

ment to come. Set this before your eyes, labour not to finde a pleasant life here: But rather learne of this king in y middest of all abundance to meditate, to search out the vanitie of all these things, and so to draw our harts from them. Besore this present estate do mislike vs, we can not sigh & groan for a better. Which those do that haue received the first fruits of the spirite, as wee are taught Rom.8. Rom.8:  
Let not deceiuable things blind our eies Whosoever he be that doeth not mislike this present estate, yea hate life, in comparison of eternall life, he shall never tast of the ioyes of heauen.

Thus he hath concluded touching wisdome. Now he commeth unto those his great workes, which serued for honour & pleasure. He had his portion in them for the time: but he doth shewe by reasons that there was nothing in them but losse and extreme vanitie: these be his words. I hated also all my labour in which I labour vnder the sunne. As he hated life, so he hated all his labour, and why? because he must leaue it vnto an other man.

## The fourth Sermon.

It may seeme that in this he went too farre : for should that grieue him : nature doth teach men to loue their childe[n] and posteritie, and so to prouide for them as for their owne bowels. That maketh men trauaile so willingly to get possessi-  
ons , which they may conney unto their childe[n] , and beyng done with equitie & moderation is a thing very commenda-  
ble . Is Solomon then become unnatu-  
rall, that it grieueth him because he hath  
laboured for his sonne ? For he saith, I  
hated all my labour, in which I laboured  
vnder the sunne , because I shall leaue it  
to the man that shall be after mee . We  
may not take it so . For doubtlesse he had  
naturall affection & loue to his childe[n] .  
But here is his griefe , and this is that  
which doth stick so nigh him, and causeth  
him to hate his labour , that hee can not  
tell whether the man whom he shal make  
his heire and leaue all his workes unto,  
will proue wise or a foole . He must haue  
all, though hee be a foole . He must rule o-  
uer all his labours wherein he hath la-  
boured and shewed wisedome .

This

This is the vanitie. Here is the sore  
and griefe. He shewed exceeding great  
wisdome in all his workes, he delighted  
in wisdome, he disdained follie: and now  
can he not tell whether all his workes  
wrought in wisdome, shall come into the  
hands of a foole. And in ded his sonne Re-  
hoboam did not proue very wise, when  
he forsooke the counsell of the old men,  
and followed the counsell of the yong  
men. And when he forsooke the way of  
Dauid & Solomon, (that is, the way of  
the Lord) and set vp Idolatrie, and false  
worship. 2.Chr. 11. It is a thing which 2.Chr. 11.  
commeth vsually to passe among men:  
that the father is wise, and the sonne a  
foole. But let it be that a man perceieth  
his sonne, (vnto whom he shall commit  
uer all his good and possessions) is wise,  
yet he doth not know what his sonne or  
his sonnes sonne shal be. For it doth fall  
out that certaine generations are wise in  
their worldly affaires, and do increase  
their substance: & after riseth vp a foole,  
and he doth scatter and wast his patrimo-  
nie. For we must not restrain his words

## The fourth Sermon.

to the next heire, when he saith, I shall  
leauie it to the man that shall be after me:  
and who doth know whether he shall be  
wise, or a foole?

¶ Marke one thing then in this place.  
¶ If those works which are wrought wise-  
ly, haue no certaintie in the heires which  
succeede, but may come into the handes of  
a foole, and do veryp often: what shall we  
say of thole houses and landes which are  
gotten vniustly, and by hard dealing: as  
by couetousnes, by extortiōn, by bryberie,  
by deceipt, and violence? He doeth not  
meane that such men as come by their  
goods so naughtily, do shew themselves  
wise in their laboures, for wisdome is  
with uprightness and truthe. What mer-  
uaile is it then, though such possessions do  
come to naught, for by the iust iudgement  
of God they come into þ hands of fooles:  
couetous ambitious fooles gat them, and  
prodigall riotous fooles doe spend them.  
¶ Pea, but we see such goods and posses-  
sions stand as firme (to mans thinking) as  
the earth, eueried from heire to heire, for  
hundrethes of yeres in continuance.

It is so no doubt, but here is our weakenesse which can not see that ffeue or sixe hundreth yeares is nothing. It is a li-  
tle prolonging of tyme, but it passeth as a shadow. Their houses, their memoriall,  
and their glory perisheth. If we did live  
but a thousand yeares we should see much  
concerning this point. We live thre score  
and ten, and in this we see somewhat.  
For there be many whose wo:kes we see  
are with fraud and bloud: and in the ve-  
rie next heire are consumed to naught in  
short tyme, . . . . .

By this the Lord doth teach vs, what  
shal be the end of those other, which seeme  
to stand as fast as the mountaines, and to  
endure all stormes and tempestes which  
do arise: thus might we see what the in-  
satiable greedinesse of man commeth vnto.  
Man walketh (saith the Prophete in  
the Psalme) in a shadow, he disquieteth  
him selfe in vaine: he heapeth vp riches  
and can not tell who shall gather them,  
for oftentimes it falleth out that þ riches  
which he hath heaped vp, come not onely  
into the handes of a foole, but of a foole

## The fourth Sermon.

which is not of his kinde.

Shall we then so hate all labour as to give it ouer , is that Solomons purpose? No , in no wise . It is not his meaning, that a man should not trauaile for his posterite , because his sonne may prove a foole. But he would not haue men so to labour , and so to set their harts as vpon a matter of value . Labour in such sort as about that which is vaine and transitorie, seruing but for present necessarie . Judge and esteeme these worldy things to bee most vaine and vncertaine : let them not hinder better things . Labour & possesse, but yet as though ye possessed not. 1. Cor.

i. Cor. 7. Labour because God will haue yee to eate bread in the sweat of your browes. But yet see and know that all your labours are subiect vnto vanitie . And so may yee come to that which hee saith, I hated all my labour. Set your delight and loue vpon the labour for the spirituall and true treasure : lift vp your minds to seeke heauen and heauenly things.

Well, he goeth yet a step further , and saith, Therefore I turned away , to make my

## The fourth Sermon. 65

my heart to be without hope , or to despaire, concerning all my trauaile vnder the sunne: for so he speaketh . This turning away , is the turning away of his minde, & affection from his workes. For, to the ende he might search duely, hee set his delight for a time vpon them. Now, to draw away the same more forciblie, he causeth his heart to despaire , or to hane no hope to receive any good in all his sore trauaile, wherein he trauailed vnder the sunne.

Here is an example for all wise men to follow, euен by deepe meditation , and a full insight into thinges , to perswade their hearts by sound reasons , that they may never hope for any good to remaine of their worldly trauails. For if men did this, they could not be so blinded with a vaine hope, and carried away, as if the commodities were incomparable which they shal reap by their labours. Men are blind herein by nature, and the deuile doth blinfolde them : he wil not let them see that which made Solomon turne away , and make his heart despaire of his laboures.

And

## The fourth Sermon.

And to see what are other mens workes in comparison of his. **H**ee doeth ( as it were) fish in the maine sea , and they in little ditches. If his nets come vp empty, how then?

**T**ouching this matter he hath hether-to spoken of himselfe, now he doeth am- plifie it by a kinde of comparison . It is taken from the meaner sort of men, there is none of them, but if he haue laboured in wisdome, knowledge and equitie, but it may greeue him, that he must leaue it to another man. Which hath not trauay- led there in, for his portion. **T**his he saith is vanitie, and a great euill. **F**or by this it commeth to passe , that one man tra- uileth, and another receiueth all the pro- fite and commoditie. **T**he father, to make his sonne rich, so turmoyleth and pyneth himselfe , that he hath no pleasure of his life: the sonne, when he is a father doeth the like for his childe , and so euerie one defraudeth himselfe. **F**or he demandeth, what remaineth to a man of all his tra- uile and greefe of heart, wherin he hath trauailed vnder the sunne . And marke

on R

how

how hee ioyneth grēfe with mans tra-  
uayle. For he addeth in the next wordes,  
that all his daies are sorrowes, and his  
trauaile greefe, his heart also resteth not  
in the night.

He doeth in few wordes paynt out a  
miserable condition of such as be world-  
lings, and grēdie of gaine. A couetous  
man hath tortures and sorrowes sufficiēt  
in him. They cannot gather riches, and  
kēp them, but with sorrowes and greefs.  
Yea all tyme, & continually, for he saith,  
all their daies are sorrowes. It agreeth  
with that which I alledged out of Saint  
Paul 1. Tim. 6. When he saith, that y<sup>e</sup> lone  
of money is the roote of all euill: which  
while some haue lusted after, they haue  
erred from the faith, and pearced them-  
selues through with many sorrowes. But  
this which he addeth last, goeth beyonde  
all, that the heart doeth not lie downe, or  
rest in the night. The night is made for  
rest, when men haue on the day time tra-  
uailed and wearied themselues, the body  
cannot endure without rest. Now when  
that is laid down, the heart or mind doth  
not

1. Tim. 6.

## The fourth Sermon.

not lie downe, but walketh about all the night long.

It is the cheef part of man, but in this respect, in worse case then the bodie, that it walketh al about, and taketh no rest in the night. In the day time it is busied, and setteth the body a wolke: if the bodie could holde out, it would also, and never rest: but it cannot, and therefore in the night the heart doeth wander, and folowes the busines alone.

Here is great instruction for couetous ambitious worldlings, if they might haue their eies opened: certainly they be stark soles which couet to be rich. If they were not blinde as stones, they must needes feele that which he uttereth here, & haue these thoughts in themselves. I desire, and I labour to gather riches, all my labours are full of greeves and sorowes. I haue such hindrances and losses, & meete with so many crosse matters, that it vexeth and disquieth my heart. I haue such care to increase and keepe that which I haue, that my hart resteth not in y night. I haue so many enemies, and that great men,

men, which lie in wayte to pluck me. I am to buy a peice of lande, for which I must disburse a great deale of money, if I lose it, I am euен halfe vndone: If the title shoulde not be good, or if my evidēces shoulde be made vnskilfullie, there is such craftie dealing in the world, that I shalbe sure to lose it. This troubleth my minde day and night. I cannot sleepe quietly, I labour all the day, euен while my bones ake. When night commeth I am afraide of theues. For, my cattle, my corne, or my money lyeth in danger. My heart, when I lie in my bed, is either vpon my goods in the fields, or deuising where I may light vpon some good bargaine. I haue light vpon euil credtors, and crafty dealing felowes, I am afraide I shal never come by mine owne. But why doe I goe about to reckon vp all particulars, a man were almost as good take vpon him to number the stars. My sorowes and cares are infinite. I dreame of theues, I am troubled in my sleepe with this and that busines. I perceiue that my hart neuer lieth downe, neuer taketh any rest,

but

## The fourth Sermon.

but when my bodie is a steepe, that walketh about. In the morning (my body being refreshed) I am carried abroad again so long as I am able to indure. My sorowes doe last continuallie, and haue no ende, I am a night-walker, what shal I get? When I haue laboured, and heaped vp all that I can, another which hath not trauayled therein must haue my portion. I haue dealt wisely to get riches, which I leaue behinde me in great plentie. It may be they shal come into the handes of a foole, which will scatter them abroade. What a wretched foole am I, thus to tormente and disquiet my selfe in vaine? Greefe, and care, and sorrowes, & toyle night and day, and no good remaine. I wish it from the very bottom of my hart, and I doe instantly begge it of God, that mens eyes might be opened, to see cleere in this poynt, & that they would deepeley meditate vpon this doctrine. For I doe not hope to see any great fruite of the gospel, so long as men be so greedie of this world. We shall see hote professors of gods word, both of preachers and people, which in

in fewe yeres setting their heartes vpon  
riches, become colde inough.

Alas, it is not possible they should cō-  
tinue vpright, vntesse we will imagine  
that the scripture is not true, which saith,  
Ye cannot serue God and riches.

And here again geue me leaue to rea-  
son a little by cōparison. King Solomon  
hated life, hated all his wōkes, turned a-  
way his heart, to make it despaire of his  
trauaile, in the middest of riches and ho-  
no; lawfullie gotten, crieth out that all is  
vanitie, sorowes, and greefes, and conti-  
nuall vexation of minde, and no good re-  
mayneth. What shal we thinke then of  
such as get their goods vnlawfully? Ma-  
nie doe scrape, and catch on all sides, so  
they may lay holde, they care not how,  
whether it be by violence or by fraude.  
Yea they pluck it euē from the pōre and  
nædie, from the faterles & from the wi-  
dow, for such wretched men there be ma-  
ny in these daies.

Now, beside all such miseries and sor-  
rowes as he hath spoken of, accursed are  
such riches, yea, the heauie curse of God  
hangeth

## The fourth Sermon.

hangeth ouer those men , which clime to  
wealth and honour that way. For sake it  
people, forsake it , & deale uprightly eue-  
rie man with his neighbor. If ye haue ei-  
ther house or land y commeth not right-  
lie, or any goods euill gotten, restore all to  
the true owners. Wilt thou appeare be-  
fore thy iudge , or darest thou come into  
his presence to holde vp giltie handes ?  
Wilt thou damne thine owne soule for a  
little worldly wealth ? For , how wilt  
thou escape damnatio, if thou hast hidden  
stolne goodes among thy stufte ? If thou  
hast not repented , how wilt thou be sa-  
ued ? If thou reserue that which thou  
knowest to bee none of thine , how dost  
thou repent ?

At this I canot but wonder, how men  
dare ( when they die ) make gifte to their  
children of euill gotten goods ? I doe not  
maruaile to see men deceiue and defraude  
one another while they liue. The nature  
of man is so licourish of gaine, and the de-  
uill leadeth men on in a forgetfulness,  
that they shal euer be brought to make a-  
ny reckoning. Againe, they be so afraide  
that

that they shall want to serue their necessities before they die. But when they lie sick, and can see no remedie but death, knowing they must come to iudgement, and would faine be saued, and therefore do crie for mercie: I saie it is verie strange, that they will then depart, and carrie the stolen goods before the iudge, and damne their owne soules. For many a one doth remember euен at that time, this same house, or such a peice of land is none of mine. My father gatte it, and held it vnlawfullie in my knowledge, it is such a mans, if he had his right.

I remember I did deceiue many, and oppressed them: I haue hindred them for to enrich my selfe. I haue taken vnlawfull gaine: I haue griped the poore that sold for need, I haue sold them hard peniworthes. Well God haue mercie vpon mee, I will not restore it, I will giue it to mine heire. How horrible is the estate of these men? How wretched are they which grow great and faede vpon bryberie: it is best to keepe thy hands vnspotted from one penie of wrong gottē goods:

## The fourth Sermon.

but if thou hast dealt vnjustly, repent, re-  
store it, & leaue it not behinde thee among  
thy substance, when thou goest to iudge-  
ment. For the iudge will send to thy tent  
and fetch it, and lay it before thee: thou  
shalt be found guiltie, and not able to an-  
swere. Thus I conclude then, there is no  
good remaineth to a man of al his works  
wherein he hath dealt wisely & upright-  
ly, though his goods so gotten be manie &  
his honour great, yet after al his sorrow-  
full daies he must forgoe all, an other  
must haue that which he hath trauailed  
in: those goods and honours euill gotten  
are much worse.

Upon occasion of these former reasons  
he doth repeat againe, what is all the good  
which a man can haue of his laboures:  
that is to eat and drinke, and to delight  
his soule with the profit of al his labour.  
He saith before in this chapter, that he  
withheld his heart from no ioy, and that  
was his portion of all his labour. He had  
nothing else. And now he telleth that it  
is al, which any man can haue by his tra-  
uaile. For by eating and drinking, and  
deligh-

delighting his soule ; he meaneth all the  
vse of mans works, and of his riches. Let  
a man take part of them while he liueth,  
and vse them in such sort, as that his sor-  
rowes and vexations may be mitigated.  
We may not take it that he stirreth men  
up here vnto ex celle, vnto gluttonie and  
drunkennesse, or to become belligodis and  
Epicures. Neither is it his mind to shew  
here what the flesh indgetteth : for the next  
words do shew that he speaketh of a good  
thing. Ifoy else how shold it be said, I  
saw that this is of the hand of God ? it is  
Gods gift vnto a man, when he can eat  
and drinke, and delight his soule with the  
good of his trauaile.

Ye haue seene before how he condem-  
ned eating and drinking, and pleasures,  
when a man doth power forth him selfe  
vnto the riotously : they make men mad,  
& to become beasts. But God hath made  
& ordeined many things not only to serue  
necessitie, but also for pleasure & delight  
of his children, which they be to vse mo-  
derately and wisely. They differ much  
from the carnal man. For he doth delight

## The fourth Sermon.

his soule in eating and drinking, forgetting God, and drowned in these things. But they solace themselves so in these things, that their hartes delight is not drawnen from God. For they beholde his blessing, favour and good will in the creatures of which they take their part: And this in deed is of the hand of God. The delight which the Epicure hath in filling his belly, is nothing beyng cōpared with this. It is but as the beasts dw. God must be our delight, we may not delight in the creatures further then thus, that he hath giuen them vs as our portion here. Wē rejoyce in the Lord, when wē rejoyce in them so.

The other sort are far from this. For they dw delight themselves, and imagine that they take their part, as Solomon saith, but if the remembrance of God come in the way, all is marred: their pleasure is in vanities and sinnes. Do but speake of death, of the day of iudgement, or of Gods displeasure against sinners, & they take it euill, and be angrie. They say it is no time nor place to speak of such matters,

## The fourth Sermon. 71

fers, they came to be merie. Ruffians and riotous beasts solace themselues and are merie, but yet it cometh not nigh this gift of God. This is in no mans power, but where the giuer doth bestow it.

Some man hath great plentie, and doeth grudge at his owne belli, this man is miserable covetous, if clay would nourish him, he would eat it so spare his substance: yea, he would eat worse for need.

Another hath abundance, and saith to his soul, eate, drinke, and be merrie, thou hast goods enough laide by for many yeres. Why doeth not this man right? He is covetous, and stayeth upon the riches, he delighteth in them. Read the 12. Chapter of S. Luke, and there ye shall see how our Saviour setteth him out, pulling downe his barnes, & building greater.

This then is Gods gift, with peace of conscience with ioy in God, for a man to take his part, and to delight himselfe in his labours. This is not in euery man which hath riches. For if a man stay upon them, their torment is never ended,

## The fourth Sermon.

they can never be satisfied. So, when he hath all, his stay is doubtfull and therfore he seeketh to heap vp still, supposing that in greater abundance he shall quiet his minde. O saith one, if I had but two hundreth pounds of god land, by the yeare, I would be fully contented. It falleth out that hee hath two & two, and as his goods are increased, so is his minde more grapple. He is lesse satisfied then, when he was poore. Let vs stay vpon God, and use that he giveth with a cheiresfull mind. The worldlings doe reioyce, but it is a madde ioy: for there be stinges within in their conscience, which doe marre their mirth. Euen in ilaughter the heart is sorrowfull, and the end of that mirth is heauiness, Pro. 14. diuersi iustus.

Pro. 14.

It may be said, how coulde Solomon tell this? he might know his owne heart, but coulde hee judge of other men? To this he maketh answeare: Who could eat, and who could hast vnto outward things more then I? As if he should say, I know there is no man vnder heauen, which can of hym selfe, or by any gifte of nature

that

## The fourth Sermon. 72

that is in him,eate and drinke, and delight  
his heart in his labour , for if any man  
were able, it was my selfe : but I coulde  
not, therefore I am sure no other coulde,  
vnlesse it were geuen him of God, euē by  
a worke of grace. I was rich , I was in  
honor, I had wisdome abone all other, I  
had as little to care for as any , and yet  
could not I doe this without a speciall  
gift and grace of God.

The next verse doeth more clērly lay  
open this matter, by exp̄ressing the cause  
on both sides . For (saith he) to the man  
that is good in his sight , God geueth  
wisdome, knowledge, and ioy : but to  
the sinner he geueth paine, to gather &  
to heape vp, to geue to him that is good  
before God . The Lord is gracious and  
bountifull vnto whome it pleaseſt him.  
The man that findeth fauour in his sight,  
or vpon whom he setteth his heart, he re-  
ceiueth from him all blessings . For vnto  
him he geueth wisdome, and knowledge,  
and ioy.

He speaketh not here of the worldie  
wisdome and knowledge, of which he said

## The fourth Sermon.

before, in the multitude of wisdome is much indignation, and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. For we see, that the wisdome and knowledge whereof he speaketh here, haue ioy accompanying them. This is the knowledge of holy things, the feare of God, the trust, & delight in him. From hence doth spring the cōtempt of this present world, the treading downe of immoderate cares and sorrowes about it, and the free vse with ioy and gladnes of all Gods benefites. This is it of which it is said in the Psalme, It is in vaine to rise vp early, & late to take rest, eating the bread of sorrowes, he doeth surely geue his beloued sleepe. There he calleth it slæpe, and here he doeth call it ioy. For he speaketh not of that sleepe of the bodie, so much as of y quietnes of minde which the godly man enjoyeth, whether he be rich or poore.

Let vs obserue further, that it is not onely Gods gift, to vse the things of this world aright, with sound comfort, but also a speciall gift of wisdome and true understanding, wherby the man is directed.

As this is Gods mercie to the god, so the contrarie, that is, to be a drudge in the world, to be vexed, molested and tormented with cares, to eate the bread of sorowes, for to heape vp, and increase riches, is a punishment and iudgement of God vpon wicked men. For he saith, that God geueth torment or paine to the sinner, to gather and to heape vp. And as the other is wisdome, so this is follie. The god man (through the true knowledge of God) despiseth the world: the worldlie man is blinded with follie, and tormenteth himselfe for the world.

It is true that a penaltie is layd vpon all Adams children, that with the sweat of their browes they shall eat bread: but the blessing of God doeth asswage the greuousnesse thereof, vnto the faithfull. His curse ( as wee may gather by this place) doeth double it vpon the wicked. For when it is saide, God geueth him paine, it must needes be more than common.

A very notable place to be considered of all men: to teach them whence all molestia-

## The fourth Sermon.

lestations doe spring, for the maintaining  
of this present life. We see many haue a  
sore burthen vpon them, and are troubled  
in such wise to get their living, that they  
be euen wearie of life. They put to all  
the trauell of their bodies, and studie, and  
deuises of their minds, to winde out, but  
all will not serue. They grudge & mur-  
mure, they catch on every side what they  
can lay hold of, they deale deceitfull y, they  
use couzenage, but neuer the nere. What  
do they say at the last? this is an harde  
world: they haue not the wisdome to see  
that God doeth accurse them. And why?  
Because they be wicked sinners.

Others there be which know no end  
of their goods, and of those Solomon doth  
here particularly speake, which yet not-  
withstanding are neuer satisfied: they  
haue so much care to gather and still to  
heape vp, that they defraud their owne  
soules of good, they doe not enjoy that  
which they haue. The world is full of  
these: a man that looketh vpon the world  
thinke them iolly fellowes: they can not  
do amisse, they haue plentie. Aske how  
doth

doth such a man: answere is made, hee  
can not but doe well, hee doth live at his  
hearts ease: hee may dispend ffeue hun-  
dred pounds by the yeare. When as ne-  
uerthelesse his heart is in little ease: for  
cares doe pinch him: he doeth still tur-  
moile him selfe for to heape vp more: he  
doeth rob his owne bellie: he doth grudge  
to laie out any thing vpon himselfe: be-  
cause he is looth to diminish his substance.

This punishment (which he in blind-  
nesse can not perceiue) hath God laied  
vpon him. For he is worthie to be thus  
punished, beyng one which hath let goe  
the feare of the Lord. Thus we see that  
the righteous iudge doth punish the con-  
tempt of his lawes, both in this world  
and in that which is to come. Now the  
 vexation and trouble both of bodie and  
 minde, which men doe sustaine: in the  
 world to come, the everlasting paines of  
 hell. It is not against this doctrine, which  
 is said to the rich glutton in hell, thou re-  
 ceiuedst good in thy life, & Lazarus paine,  
 and now contrariwise hee is comforted,  
 and thou art tormented. For this rich man  
 which

## The fourth Sermon.

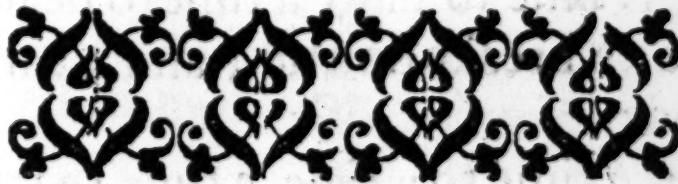
which was so daintily kept, both for his apparell & diet, thought he received god (when it was no more but such pleasure as brute beasts injoy) which he had in all his abundance: and wanting faith to rest vpon God, he was not without his cares: for riotous men, and delicate Epicures, be very couetous and greedie of gaine: for if they had a sea of wealth, they are in doubt it will be drie vp.

How happie are those which find favour in Gods sight, which haue a portion in this life, and afterward inherit eternall glory. This is it which Saint Paule saith, godliness is great riches, which of it selfe doeth bring contentation, and is fully sufficient: for it hath the promises of this life and the life to come. There is an other thing which hee saith is a vantie, which God also doeth lay vpon the wicked: that they with vexation doe traueil to gather riches (not for themselues) but to gine vnto the righteous. They haue laboured, but full little doe they know vnto whom the fruite of their labour shall come. The Alse doeth carrie great

# The fourth Sermon. 75

great waight of treasure vpon his backe,  
but not for him selfe, or vnto any vse of  
his owne, but for his maister. Even so  
these doe grone, and are burthened, and  
carrie the waight vntill they bring it  
where God will bestow the same. Thus  
he hath laid open what men find in world-  
ly possessions. Let vs carefully remem-  
ber his doctrine.

*The end of the fourth  
Sermon.*





## *The fifth Sermon.*

### *Ecclesiastes. Chap. 3.*



O all things there is an appointed time, and a time to euery purpose vnder the heauen .

2 A time to be born, a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck vp that which is planted.

3 A time to slay, a time to heale: a time to breake downe, and a time to builde.

4 A time to weepe, a time to laugh: a time to mourne, and a time to dance.

5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones: a time to imbrace, and a time to be farre from imbrasing.

6 A time to finde, a time to lose: a time

## The fifth Sermon. 67

time to keepe, and a time to cast away.

7 A time to rent, a time to sewe: a time to keepe silence, and a time to speake.

8 A time to loue, and a time to hate: a time of warre, and a time of peace.

9 What profite hath hee that worketh, of the thing wherein hee trauayleth?

10 I haue seen the trauaile that God hath geuen to the sonnes of men, to occupie them therein.

11 He hath made euery thing bewtifull in his time: also he hath sette the world in their heart, (except that which man cannot finde out,) euuen the worke which God worketh from the beginning to the end.

12 I know there is nothing good in them, but to reioyce, and to doe good in his life.

13 And also that euery man eat and drinke, and see the commoditie of al his labour: this is the gift of God.

14 I knowe that what soever God shall doe, it shall be for euer, to it can no man

## The fifth Sermon.

man adde, and from it can no man diminish: for God hath done it that they should feare before him.

15 What is that, that hath beene? that is now: and that that shall be hath now byn: for God requireth that which is past.

## Ecclesiastes. Chap. 3.



O all things there is &c. If we were not very dul scho-  
lers, blinde and earthlye minded, there is inough  
said in þ two for-  
mer Chapters, to  
perswade vs throughly, that mans estate  
vnder the sanne, when it is at the best, is  
most vain and miserable. But seeing our  
naughtinesse is such, that we fasten our  
loue, and put our trust in things transito-  
rie, although we know them to be such:

the wise man goeth on with furthes per-  
swasions to recouer vs ( if it be possible )  
from this accursed and damnable way.  
He made triall in him selfe , being the a-  
blest man that euer was , in the know-  
ledge and vse of all excellent thinges vnder  
heauen: and proclaimeth that there is  
nothing but vanitie , & affliction of spi-  
rite.

We shall now haue the inconuenien-  
ces, euils and mischeses, which he obser-  
ued to fall vpon other menne , which  
hee was free from, (the first which hee  
now dealeth in excepted ) and which in  
deede doe make this life exceeding mise-  
rable . For if Solomon with all his glo-  
rie, in the middest of his great riches and  
pleasures, found no good , what shall wee  
say of the life of those, ( which are farre  
the greatest part of the world ) that in the  
steade of his delightes, are laden with e-  
uils ? I suppose there is no man so sim-  
ple, but can reason thus : If the life of  
Solomon were vexation , what is the  
life of other men ? He was free from ma-  
ny greeves that light vpon all other.

## The fifth Sermon.

These gr̄ēfes did he obserue, & some of them he noteth. But first he vseth one generall argument, as the grounde and foundation therof, which doeth also serue for confirmation of his former discours: which(as I said) he himselfe, and all his works are subiect vnto. It is taken from the time: all things vnder heauen are in time, and therefore changeable w̄ time. No maruaile therefore, that al creatures, all workes, studies, indeuours, councels, and desires, be vaine, and no profite remayning, seeing time eateth them vp quite.

To all things (saith he) there is an appointed time, and a season for euerie purpose vnder heauen. All things vnder the sunne, or, as the holy Apostle speketh 2. Cor. 4. the things which are seen, are temporall: and for this cause they alter, they varie, they change, they succeeds one another, there is nothing but a continuall turning, and tumbling vp and downe of all, euē as times doe turne and alter. There is nothing constant and durable, but it hath a season, and then the con.

contraris thereunto bath the time also,  
and expelleth it.

It were infinite to gather every par-  
ticular, but he gathereth so many as may  
leade vs to the contemplation and sight  
of all the rest. There is a time to bring  
forth or to be borne, and a time to die.  
These two are set the one against the o-  
ther. A man, and each living thing hath a  
time when it commeth forth into the  
world, and after certaine daies or yeares  
that turne about, the time for death doth  
come. Who, or what can withstand this?  
The like is for all works y are wrought:  
there is a time for their making, there  
comineth a time for their marring. We  
must take this by the way, that he doeth  
not minde to shew what is lawfull and  
right to bee done, but what is done by  
change of time.

Men plant trees, which grow and live  
many yeres: but trees ware so olde, that  
they be plucked vp againe. There com-  
meth a time of slaughter and killing, and  
a time to heale the wounded. The migh-  
tier sort build great houses, & so strong,

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The fifth Sermon.

as it semeth they shold continue for euer: but they weare out with age, & the time commeth when other doe pluck the downe, and build new. Thus is it in all workes vnder heauen. There is nothing but continuall doing, and vndoing that which was done before.

Euen so commeth it to passe in all mans affectiōs, and desires in his works, and in the successe of matters. There is prosperitie, health, and good successe. The doeth he reioyce and laugh, then doeth he daunce and skip for ioy. Aduersitie followeth in her time, then doeth he weepe, then doeth he mourn and lament: this we al know by experiance. But because he saith, There is a time to daunce, I must speake some what of that. There be some which mainteine daunsing, & these be their words: Wee can proue by the Scripture y daunsing is allowed, there is a time (saith Solomon) to daunce. I noted before, & they which obserue well the course of things here spoken, shal find it true, that he dispeteth not what is done lawfullie, but what is done. But I will not

## The fifth Sermon. 79

not holde them in this straight, I will graunt in this one particular of dansing, that he speaketh of a thing lawfull: yet shall ye see that they doe founly abuse gods word in the sence they alledge it. There are more kindes of daunsing than one. If they will haue this Scripture serue their turne, they must shewe that such daunsing as is vsed now a daies: wanton dansing, by whiche men and women nourish and feede their fleshy lustes, is here mainteyned. By such dauncing sinne is much increased, God is not glorified by it.

Are they not then ashamed to make Gods word alow it, & so to be cōtrarie to it selfe: For Gods word doth condemne chambering and wantonnesse. Rom.13. Rom.13. If any replie, and say we can doe it with a chaste mind, onely for recreation, and in sober maner, when at a marriage such mirth is to be vsed. I answe, that such are not to be so disallowed as the rest.

But yet with all we must take this, that every one is to haue regard not onely of his owne chastitie, but also for the

## The fifth Sermon.

preseruation of the chastitie of all other.  
If thou do that which is a baite to stirre  
up, and kindle euill lustes in other, thou  
doest breake the rule of loue, thou doest  
hurt thy neighbour, therefore take heed  
how thou daunce. But let this passe, that  
we may goe on: There be many workes  
of me, which in their season are wrought  
and haue their time, when their contra-  
rie succedeth and they vanish: There is a  
time to cast away stones, and a time to  
gather stones. This is not to be restrai-  
ned vnto the particular expressed, but  
may represent many actions of mans life  
which he doth, and vndoeth of hym selfe:  
for the mind doth alter and change often  
with the tynes. There is a time to im-  
brace, that is for marriage, and there is a  
time to abstaine. He noteth diuers other  
things, as a time to find, to lose, to keepe,  
to cast away, to rent in pærces, & to sewe  
together, to keepe silence, and to speake,  
to loue, to hate, of warre and of peace.

What do al these, and a thousand such  
like, but shew that we are shut vp in  
time, the times do change, and we are  
changed

changed in them. We haue good sped, we haue euill sped, we make, we marre, we alter, we change, we loue, we like, we loath, we mislike, we are in quiet to day, to morrow in trouble, we never cease turmoiling, and can make nothing stand constant, either within vs, as in our mindes, or without vs, in our workes. Whereat he breaketh forth into an exclamation, what profit hath he that worketh in the thing wherein he trauaileth? If we could fasten the eyes of our mind, upon this which he hath set forth in some particulers, euen to behold the variancelle, the alterations, the change of all creatures, of all workes, of counsels, deuises, enterprises, events, affections, and desires, we should see that in deed there is no profit remaining of al the sore trauaile wherein men torment theselues. When peace lasteth some clime vp in honour, some build, some plant: as we see the little Ants hastie to cast vp their hill, a man doth spurne it with his foot, al is scattered, those that were in the top, are cast downe with the lowest. Eue so when the wars

## 8 The fifth Sermon.

doe come, there is a new face of al things, there is casting downe from dignitie, breaking downe, and rooting vp, yea many grieuous and horrible spectakels doe every where appeare.

Here may we consider againe, the admonition which our Saviour doth give, Math. 6. Lay not vp for your selues treasures in earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, & where theues breake through and steale. But lay vp for your selues treasures in heauen, where neither the moth nor rust doth corrupt, & where the theues doe not breake through & steale.

i. Tim. 6. Here may we also remember what S. Paul saith i. Tim. 6. Charge those that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, and that they truist not in uncertainte riches: for as all other things haue but their time, so is it with riches. There be many waies for men to lose them, as times doth fall out.

It is needlesse to make rehearsal in the particulars: but I will rather put you in minde of that exhortation which the holy Ghost maketh, Pro. 23. Beware not thy selfe

selfe saith he to be rich: cease from thine  
owne vnderstanding. Wilt thou cast  
thine eyes vpon them, for straight way  
they are not. For riches make the wings,  
they flie away as an Egle toward the  
heauens. The rich man doth keepe them  
but as a bird in a cage, the doore is no so-  
ner open, but they whip out & are gone:  
they mount vp toward the heauens, that  
is, where the owner can not follow to lay  
hold of them againe. O yee rich men can  
ye pull the feathers, or clip the wings of  
your riches? can ye make them as tame  
soules to tarrie with yee for euer? they be  
uncertaine, they haue but their time, do  
what yee can to make them sure.

I may say the like for honours and  
dignities, for bewtie and fauour, yea for  
all things vnder the sunne: they haue but  
their time, and the come to naught. Looke  
vp then vnto the eternall and ever living  
God, he is before and after all time, he is  
alwaies the same. Seke for to possesse  
him for your inheritance: with him there  
be durable riches: hee will never fayle  
ye. Pray vnto God to teach ye to number  
your

## The fifth Sermon.

your daies, that ye may apply your harts  
vnto wisdome. For to your selues, and to  
your workes there is but a time. It is  
not in vaine that the prophet saith, teach  
vs to number our daies, that we may  
applie our harts to wisdome. For though  
the times be thus apparantly variable,  
and inconstant, yet men are folishly blin-  
ded. For it will be said, that althoough a  
man live but a tyme, yet his workes may  
continue long. For ther be some whose  
houses and auncetrie haue cōtinued fīue  
hundred yeares, some say they can shew  
for a thousand yeares. These haue stood as  
mighty Cedars, yea as the mountaines  
themselues in the middest of all stormes  
and tempestes. They continue for all the  
broiles that haue been in the revolutions  
of times: Men may make their workes  
so strong, that they may stand for ever.  
What a goodly thing is it, if their posteri-  
tie may florish in honour for a thousand  
yeares.

Alas poore soules, who is able to make  
sound or due p̄rofesse of a thousand yeares?  
there be many which set vp their bristles  
and

and looke a loft, if they can finde that their  
auncetors haue bæne men of worship, &  
continued ffe or sixe hundred yeares :  
let it be a thousand, how little a part haue  
they of it. Their fathers daies did not  
profit them, nor theirs on the other side do  
them any good. They haue not learned  
that a thousand yeares are but as yester-  
day. They are but as a watch in y night  
when they be past : yea euен as a tale  
that is told. We see also that the mightie  
strong kingdomes and monarchies of the  
world, had but their time and are fallen.  
And shall any man be able to make his  
worke so sure, that they shall not haue  
their time to be broken downe ? men do  
reach at such a thing, but all in vaine be-  
cause the state of the world shal continue  
still the same, the tyme shall fall out as  
they haue doone. The wise men of the  
world doe read the histories of former a-  
ges : they see examples set before them of  
all sortes, which do as it were in a glasse  
represent vnto them the truth of this doc-  
trine.

For they see that all the mighty kings  
with

## The fifth Sermon.

With their nobles and wise counsellors  
hauē laboured in vaine : their thoughts,  
their cōsels, their works, together with  
their glorie , are vanished and conie to  
naught: what profit haue they of all their  
travaile , more then to be pictured in the  
Catalogue of kings? and yet these labour  
still, as if their works should stand for e-  
uer . Either they be deceived with this,  
that their wisdome and policies shall be  
able to doe more, or else they be perswa-  
ded amisse, that the times to come wil not  
be so variable. For out of al doubt, if they  
were thus perswaded , the mightie men  
and men of renoune that were before vs,  
did as much as was possible by power or  
wisdom to be done , that their workes  
might be dureable , and yet wee see all is  
gone . The changes and alterations of  
times haue overturned them quite.

This variablenesse of time will con-  
tinue still : they would not so a thing of  
naught cast away themselves , I meane  
by setting their harts so vpon this world  
that they lose eternall glory . And if they  
yeld thus farre , that the men of former  
ages

ages did as much as they can possibly do; but they thinke the times may be better: let them consider that which Solomon here addeth, concerning this variablenes and change of times. For he doth note divers points touching this matter.

First, that God himselfe hath done it. I saw (saith he) the trauaile which God bath geuen to the sonnes of men, to occupie and busie them therein. It is not the wheele of blinde fortune, whereby al things are so tossed and turnede here under the sunne. It commeth not by chance or aduenture, that man and al his doings are subiect to the changeablenes of time. It is God, the maker and ruler of heauen and earth, that hath giuen or appointed vnto man, to toile himselfe, and to be busied in this sort.

All men must be occupied, therefore the old things decay, or be destroyed, that new may be done. If there were no decay, nor no vndoing of things done in former ages, there would haue beene inough done long agoe, to suffice all that shoulde follow. But as he said, there is a time

## The fift Sermon.

to plant , and a time to plucke vp that which is planted: a time to break down, and a time to builde. Some vndoe and destroy, as fast as other set vp. Thus shall it continue to the worlds ende , because God hath thus decreed , and set it vpon the children of men. The wise man beholding this, with other things before mentioned, was clean out of hope, that any of all his goodly works, wrought with such wisdome, should continue: For who can withstand Gods decree?

Secondly, he sheweth that this is done of God by a goodly, excellent, and iust dispensation, he vttereth it in these words: he hath made every thing beutifull in his time . We haue scene certaine particulars, whereby he declared that euerie thing hath his time, and their contraries succede . A time to be borne, a time to die, a time of warre , a time of peace, a time to loue, a time to hate. Goe through all things vnder heauen, and it is so.

He saith also, that God hath set it thus. It might arise in mens minds, how can these thinges come from God , are they  
be seeming

beseeming his gouernmēt? Many things are vglie, and horrible to behold. He affirmeth that he hath made them all bewtifull in their time. In the outward appearance there be a thousand evill fauoured sights in the mischéeses, the miseries, and calamities that light vpon men: there be monstrous exploites, loathsome to be spoaken, wherby men are oppressed, and their estate made miserable. Come these from Gods appointment? Can it agree with his holy gouernment? Bea (saith Solomon) how so euer the outward appearance be, if men had eyes to see, if men were lightened with Gods spirite, it should be apparant vnto them, that all these deformed mischéeses and calamities, are not onely sent from God for iust cause, but also very bewtifull in their time.

I must here enter into some particulars, that it may be clāre, for I knowe this doctrine wil seeme strange to the ignorant sort. He said before, that there is a time of warre, and a time of peace. The one of them, that is to say, the time of peace,

## The fift Sermon.

peace, is bewtifull. All men see the bewtie of peace and commend it, for then me increase and prosper. They plant Orchardes, they buyld faire houses. Then kingdomes and cities doe flourish. But can this be said of the other, namely, of the time of warre. Is it a bewtifull sight to see men slaine, to haue their bloud run in the streetes? Is it pleasant to beholde faire houses broken downe, Cities and townes burnt and consumed, the Corne fieldes and Orchardes laid wast and destroyed? Is it delightsome for men to looke vpon the sauage barbarous Souldiers, when they take their wifes and daughters, evn the sober matrones, and bewtiful virgins, to raunish and defile them vnto their face? Can any take pleasure, when the swordes, the daggers and speares, are thrust into the young infants, the little babes, evn their daughters and their sonnes, their tender bodies cast forth into the streetes, and trodden like mire with the horses. Is not this lamentable? Shall we say that God hath made these bewtiful in their time? He saith

so, and we must belieue him. In like sorte  
hee said, There is a time to cast away  
stones, and a time to gather stones toge-  
ther: a time to find, a time to lose: a time  
to keepe, a time to cast away. The one  
part, that is to gather, to find, to keeps,  
may seeme bewtifull, but not their con-  
traries: As for example, a man gathereth  
goods, heapeþ vp riches, buildeth houses,  
and purchaseth landes. His sonne doeth  
come after, and he addeth double and tre-  
ble, he goeth beyound his father. It conti-  
nueth thus for certaine generations, un-  
till the heaps are great: at last their step-  
peth in one that scattereth all abroad. He  
is a ruffian, he is riotous, he is a dicer, he  
haunteth harlots, and so consumeth all  
that his Auncetors did gather. Is this  
bewtifull? is this a good sight? I might  
go through a number of particulars, but  
these may suffice to lay open the doctrine  
which Solomon doeth here teach. I will  
make these manifest, & so we may iudge  
of all other contraries, which in their  
times fall out by Gods prouidence, how  
he hath made them bewtifull.

## The fifth Sermon.

I know it will be said, how can these things be bewtifull? Is riot, whoredom, russian lines, dicing, or wasting goods and patrimonie, bewtifull? are murthers, bloudsheds, cruelties, rauishings of matrones and virgins, wasting & burning all pleasant things, cōfoſtable to behold? These and a number moe are vglie, horribble, and dolefull to behold. They be ſins euē of Heathen men condemned. God is holie, iust, pure, and righteous, he abhorreth & condemneth all ſinne and wickedneſſe, how can it be ſaid, that he doeth make theſe bewtifull in their time? Shall moſt foule ſinnes be bewtifull, or ſhall we ſay that God doth approoue them?

I anſwere, that neither doth God approoue ſinne, neither is ſinne bewtifull of it ſelſe at any time, and yet this ſtandeth true, he hath made every thing bewtifull in his time. Wee muſt therefore diſtinguiſh thus: God is the Author of all actions, but the ſinne of the actions commeth not neare him: For hee is infinitely holy and pure, and hateth all wickednes. Hee doth in his prouidece vſe as instruments, both

both men and devils, to bring the works to passe, and the sinne cleaueth onely unto them. The actions are good as they bee from the most blessed and holy God, but these instruments do sinne, and are iustly condemned. Moreover, if we respect the sinne it selfe, it is fond, it is lothsome, it is sorrowfull to behold: for who can behold the rauishment of women, the murthering of men and children, the burning of cities and townes, & not powre forth teares? Who can see thefes, robberies, and spoiles, yea all kind of wickednes in such manner committed, as if all the Devils in hell were losed, and walked vp on the earth in mans apparell, and not mourne? In this the things are not bewtiful.

But now in an other respect, if we behold, we shall see they be all bewtiful in their time: and that is, as they be sent as iust and due punishments from God, as the executio of his wrath, and vengeance for the wickednes of the world, and for the triall of the faith and patience of his seruants. Looke in the time of peace

## The fifth Sermon.

what securitie there is, what unthankfulness, what pride, what abusing of all Gods creatures unto riot and excesse, and ye shall see, that the sword, the famine, the pestilence, and al kinde of miserable vexations are iustly sent of God, and in that respect are bewtifull in their tyme. Will see how many doe gette their goods, with covetousnesse, with uniusl dealing, by extortiōn, briberie, and deceit, usurie, unmercifulnesse to the poore, yea euen to the widow and the fatherles, doe fill many mens purses.

Is it not a iust revenge from God, and a due executiōn, and in that respect a thing bewtifull, that a ruffian, or an unthrift, doe rise vp and riotously wast the goods that haue beeēne so naughtily gotten? The Lord God doth in righteousness gouerne all nations and people of the world, & punish their ingratitude. His owne childre offendig do not escape. The exāple of David may suffice: hee committed adultrie with Barseba, hee caused Vrias hir husband to bee slaine with the sword: the thing displeased the Lord exceedingly.

sent

sent Nathan the prophet unto Dauid, to shew him his sinne, and also the chastrice-  
ment that God would send him for the  
same. The sword shall not depart from 1.Sam.12.  
thy house for ever.

I will raise vp euill, saith the Lord, against thee out of thine owne house: I wil take thy wines before thine eies, and give them unto thy neighbour: which shall lie with thy wines in the sight of y sunne. Thou diddest this thing secretly, but I will doe it before all Israell, and in the sight of the sunne. This was the punishment threatened, let vs see how the Lord did bring it to passe. First Ammon the sonne of Dauid defileth his sister Thamar. Abshalom for reuenge being an other of Dauids sonnes, and brother unto Thamar by the mother also, doeth slay Ammon his brother. Afterward, y same Abshalom doth gather a power of men, and seeke to thrust his Father from the kingdome. Dauid is constrained to flee from Jerusalem, leauing some of his wiues there: thether commeth Abshalom, and by the counsell of Achitophel

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causeth a tent to be spread , and in the sight of all the people , went in and lay with his fathers wives . Here is Gods punishment vpon Dauid as hee before threatned . Ammon did commit abominable incest : Abshalom , besides his murder , his treason and other enormities did cōmit the like incest with his fathers wives . The Lord saith he did all this .

But as I said before , the actions were his but not the sin . The sinne did cleave vnto the men , and to the Deuill which drew them into it , vnto whose hand the Lord had iustly giuen them ouer . These sinnes in themselves are foule to look vpon , but as they be punishments sent of God vpon Dauid for his offence , they were bewtiful in their time . Thus ma we iudge of all the euils , the calamities and mischieves , which in the variablenes and change of times doe light vpon men . He hath made them ali bewtiful in the time . We must come to the third poin and that is that God vseth men as his instruments , and by them as by the meane he bringeth in all those euils , which

punisheth the wickednesse of the world withall, and sheweth his glory, except in that which he worketh himselfe extraordinarily and immediatly: his words are expounded diuers waies by diuers, but I will translate them euен as they stand, thus: He hath also set the world in their hart (except that which man can not find) euен the worke which God worketh frō the beginning to the end. When he saith, God hath set the world in their heart, hee expoundeth what hee meaneth by the world, euен the worke of God, which hee worketh from the beginning to the end. That is to say, euен the whole worke of God, for the turmoiles that be among the nations of the world: sauing that he hath made an exceptiō by the way, for he putteth in, except that which man can not find. We haue seene before how he setteth downe euery thing to haue his tyme and season.

He expressed sundrie particular partes of contraries, by which we may be induced to behold al things that are done vnder heauen, which hee calleth the world:

## The fifth Sermon.

and because Gods prouidence directeth all, he calleth it the worke which he worketh. This world (because the things be so uniuersall and so many) or this whole worke of God, hath he set in mans heart. For menne do worke it all, except that which man findeth not out, which God hath reserved to him selfe. As for example, he hath at all times so gouerned the world, that he doeth many things of him selfe without the meanes of men, both in deliuерances of some particular persons, and also in preservation of his whols Church. He hath shewed great wonders aboue mans reach. He doeth send dearths and famines, and pestilences to plague & punish the wicked. These and such like excepted: It is in mans hart to do all the rest. All the labour and turmoile of doing and undoing, of making & marring, setting vp and destroying, wee see is in the heart and minde of man. The prosperite, the aduersitie, the good successe, and the euill successe; yea all the mischiefes, dangers, inconueniences, & euils y makketh this life miserable are wrought by men.

It is not needfull that I should stande to declare this by particulars, it is so euident in euery mans knowledge. We are compassed about, both we, and our works vnder the sunne, with tenne thousand evils, which the hart of man hath in it so to doe and accomplish . We are subiect vnto all the iudgements which God sendeth extraordinarie. Our life therefore is nothing but extreme vanitie and miserie. There is in it no good y remayneth.

But as he doeth againe repeate that he saw that there is nothing good in the, but to reioyce and doe good in his life. Also, that euerie man eat and drinck, and see the commoditie of all his labour : this is the gift of God. I neede not stand vpon this, being expounded before, more then this, that he willett men to reioyce , and to doe good in their life . Which I take here to be referred vnto the true ioye in God, with the partaking of the creatures in such sort as I shewed alreadie. Not as the gluttons, y drunkardes, the epicures, and such as be geuen ouer vnto fleshlie lustes.

This

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This gift of God, as he calleth it, is not geuen vnto them, they take pleasure like bruite beastes: but when they remembred death, or the iudgement seate, they are pricked within. They bee like the sea that resteth not, but foameth out mire, there is no peace to þ' wicked, saith my God, Isaie. 57.

The fourth and lasse poynt now remayneth, whiche is, that God hath (by an vchangeable decree) done all this whiche he hath shewed of the variablenes of all things in time, and with time. There is at one time doing, at another time vndoing. There is good successe to day, and as euill to morow. Now mirth, then sorowe: prosperitie, and aduersitie. This hath God so appointed, that it cannot bee altered. Marke what he saith, I knowe that whatsoeuer God shall doe, it shal be for euer: to it can no man adde, & from it can no man diminish. These wordes be effectuall, and plaine, to teach vs, that God almighty whiche hath made þ' world and doeth governe it, hath compassed about, and shutte many vp in vanities, calamities

## The fifth Sermon. 90

lamities, and miseries, which are innumerable, even as it were within walles of brasle. There is no way to wind out, no way to alter any thing, either to adde, or to diminish. No man can change that which God hath determined. He hath in his manifold and unsearchable wisdome set this course and order in the world, to continue to the end. No thing, no purpose whatsoever vnder heauē, shal haue moze then the season, and then geue place.

By this we may be taught to beholde the madnes of the children of this world, they striue and indeuour against God, no wiser, then if one should run his head against a thicke wall of brasle to breake through it. They applie all their studie, wisdome and power, to make their estate firme, vncchangeable, and not subiect vnto vanitie.

What iuentions and deuises there be, to make themselves glorious in the earth for euer: what hope to make their posteritie flourish, and their workes (for the greatness of them) to stande euен to the last day. Alas poore blinde men, they

## The fifth Sermon.

torment themselves in vains, for God hath decreed before what shall become of them, and of all their thoughts. He hath set al vnder time to passe away, and will they goe about to alter his purpose.

Rom.8.

Here is comfort to the godly, when he saith, all that God doeth shall stand for euer, to it can no man adde, from it can no man diminish. For this doeth teach, that things fall not out at the wil & pleasure of men, but are wholly ordered by God himselfe, which causeth all thinges to work together for the best to those that loue him. The world doth rage, y migh- tie tyzants are in a furie, and doe threate destruction to the church. Many troubles and miseries arise, it seemeth there will be no end nor measure: so strong they be which trouble all, that they appeare to haue the whole sway of the earth at their commandement. But when they haue done what they can, they goe not one iot or one haire breadth beyonde that which God had before appointed.

Herein the world is like the sea, in which God hath laide the waters vpon heapes

heapes. At the stormie winds the waues therof arise, they swell, they rage, they rore, they come, & threaten to ouerwhelm the earth, and to drowne all. But God hath set the shoare, hee hath appoynted them their boundes and limites, which they cannot passe. Whether shalt y come, and not further, here shalt thou lay down thy proud waues. The devill stirreth vp the tempestes, and setteth all in a broyle upon the land. The waues doe threaten the heauens, the tyrants are so proude to enterprize great matters: but Gods prouidence and decree, that is, the shoare, further they cannot proceede, for he saith, I know that which God doeth shalbe for euer, to it can no man adde.

The next words in the text doe shew to what ende and purpose God doeth all this: and that is, that men shoulde feare before him. A most wortheie ende, both for his glorie, and for mas good. He ought to be feared and honoured, and it is true blessednes vnto those which do it. Behold then the excellent wisdome and goodnes of God, which bringeth light out of dark-

nes,

## The fift Sermon.

nes, and life out of death. He hath set man in this vaine estate, transitory and full of calamities, to drawe his minde vp to his God, to feare, to worship, and to depende vpon him, seeing vnder heauen there is nothing to stay vpon, there is nothing to help or comfort.

What dulnes is in vs when we finde that all is like a sea of miserie? if we look vpon the ages past, or the time present, and when we are tolde it shalbe so in the time to come, yet cannot our heartes drawe away from it vnto God? He doth it that we should feare before him, but we perceue it not. He leaueth vs nothing here that is worth the casting our eyes vpon, because we should turne them vnto him. He is constant, always the same, but the works of man decay, and newe are set vp in their steade. He demandeth what it is that hath beeene, and maketh answere, that which is now: and y<sup>e</sup> which shalbe, is that that hath beeene, for God requireth that which is past. All thinges are either past, present, or to come. Men in tyme past did labour, they are all set a worke

a work that liue now, and those that rise  
up after vs shall doe the like. They that  
went before, their woxkes are decaid and  
fallen, we doe but the same again. Those  
that come last, and fall to it a fresh, when  
our woxkes are vanished, shall doe no-  
thing but that which hath beene done be-  
fore.

Thus all turneth round as a whæle,  
which hee expresseth further in these  
wordes, God requireth that which is  
past. This is not fortunes whæle, it is  
God, when men turmoyle, which so ou-  
dereth the matter, that they can doe no  
more but that hath alreadie bæne done.  
For when he saith, God requireth, it is  
as much as to say, God bringeth back a-  
gaine that which is past.

Oh poore creatures what do ye? Open  
your eyes and behold with dæpe medi-  
tation that which is here set before you.  
Consider the woxkes of the ages that are  
past, what is become of them? what shall  
then become of your woxkes hereafter?  
God hath decaid, and no man can alter  
it, that this estate of things shal continuall

## The fifth Sermon.

to the end. Turne then vnto him, feare him, and for sake these vanities, and yee shall be blessed for ever.

## *The end of the fifth Sermon.*



## *The sixth Sermon.*

Ecclesiastes. Chap. 3.

Verse. 16.



Oreouer I haue seene vnder the sunne, the place of Judgement, there is iniquitie, the place of iustice, there is wickednes.

17 I said in my hart, God will iudge the iust and the wicked, for there is a time for euery purpose, and ouer euery worke there,

18 I said in my hart concerning the order of the children of men, that God hath giuen them dignitie, and to see to, they are beastes to themselues.

19 For the condition of the children of men, and the condition of the beastes, is euен as one condition to them. As the one dieth, so dieth the other, for they haue all one breath, and there is no excellencie of man aboue the beast: for all is vanitie.

20 All goe to one place, all was of the dust, & all shall returne to the dust.

21 Who knoweth the spirit of man, that it goeth vpward, & the spirit of the beast, that goeth downward to the erth.

22 Therefore I see there is nothing good, but that a man rejoice in his own workes, because that is his portion: for who shal bring him to see what shall be after him?

### Chapter 4.



¶ I turned, and behelde all the oppressions that are wrought vnder the sunne, and beheld the teates of the oppres-

Verse. 1.



oppre-

## The sixth Sermon

oppreſſed, and none comforteth them: and loe, the strength is of the hande of those that oppreſſe them, and none comforteth them.

¶ 2 Wherefore I prayſed the dead, which are now dead, aboue the liuing, which are yet aliue.

¶ 3 And I count him better thā them, both which hath not yet beeene, for he hath not ſene the euill workes which are wrought vnder the ſunne.

¶ 4 And I ſaw all trauaile, and all per-fection of the worke, that this is the en-emie of a man from his neighbor. This is also vanitie, and affliction of ſpirit.



Ecclesiastes. Chap. 4.

Oreone, I haue ſene vnder the ſunne the peace of &c.



I noted the laſt time, that he wold ſhew ſome parti-culars of the euils and

and mischeses which hee obserued to fall vpon others , which doe increase the miseries of this life . Now hee commeth to them , and first beginneth with the oppressors , and the oppressed . God hath made all the inhabitants of the earth of one bloud . He willeth them to dwell together in concord and loue; to deale iustly, uprightly, and with equitie: and none to hurt, but to doe good each to other . But all this is gone , through the corruption of our nature , and wee are geuen to oppresse, to spoyle and devoure one another like sauage beastes .

For to meete with this, and for y p[re]seruation of mankind the Lord hath ouer deyned the ciuill power, hee hath erected the seate of iudgement and iustice vpon earth, he hath put his swerd into y hands of Judges and ruleres to raigne that which is amisse . They are by d[omi]nacion of their p[er]f[ec]tice and place to rescue the innocent, to deliuer the oppressed, and to punish the wrong doers; This doeth bring much ease and quiet vnto the Inhabitantes of the earth : for without it, no societie, no

## The sixth Sermon.

common wealth can stand. There wold be nothing but theuning, killing and spoyling. If this were not somewhat at all times peruerted, there might be much more comfort and relief to the oppressed. But it falleth out as he saith, I haue seen vnder the sunne the place of iudgement, there is iniquitie, the place of iustice, there is wickednes. The wicked should there be punished, and the innocent resued, and it falleth out contrarie. The

Psal. 82. Lord complayneth of this Psal. 82. How long will ye judge vnjustly, and accepte the person of the wicked? He crieth vnto them to judge the faterles and pouer, but they heare not.

I know some take it that Solomon doeth not speake here of the iudgement seate, but by the word place, understandeth as much as to say, in steade. Then is it thus, that the people in place, that is, in steade of iustice, doe iniury & wrong one another. I could yeald vnto this, but that hee speaketh in this manner, the place of iudgement there is iniquitie, which agreeth rather to a very place, the

to

to say in steade. But it may be obie-  
ted and saide, where did Solomon be-  
hold this corrupting of justice in the ve-  
ry seate of iudgement? was not hee the <sup>2. Sam. 12.</sup> cheefe Judge in his kingdome? Did hee,  
or coulde hee beholde such a thing in his  
his owne daies, and not remedy it? I an-  
swere, that he speaketh not of that which  
he had saene in one kingdome, or at one  
time, or which he behelde so much with  
outward sight. But by an inward light  
and knowledge he beheld this great euill  
in all dominions vnder the sunne, and at  
all times.

He did know right wel the great cor-  
ruption of man, that tyrants should ofte  
sitt vpon the highest seates of iudgement.  
And moreouer, that though the king him  
selfe be iust, yet his substitutes, and such  
as are put in trust vnder him, would  
peruert iudgement many times. For  
when they should look vprightly into the  
cause, they be drawen awrie by many re-  
spects: for there be many thinges which  
hane force and strength in them to draw  
a man awrie from ministering true in-

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trite. Sometime a gift doeth blinde their eyes, for the Lord saith, a gift doeth blind the eyes, and peruerct the iudgement of the wise. Sometime they accept the person of the wicked, for some frenfhip, if not toward them, yet for some friend which intreateth that fauor may bee shewed, as it is vsuall in waightie causes that great men write unto Judges, and then downe goeth the innocent very often, unles the Judge be of great courage, and feare God.

Sometime there is hatred toward the person, for religion. When the judge is corrupt in opinion that way, as it falleth out often, because many judges are so adiected to the studie of worldly matters, and so wise in their owne estimatiō, that they must haue Gods matters squared by their rule: the wisdome of the flesh is their rule. Sometime feare carieth awrie, whē as some great person of honur doth speake or write in fauour of the guiltie. The Judges would be loth to displease such, & so in the place of iudgement there is iniquitie: iudgement commeth shortly.

wrested, as the Prophet complaineth. This increaseth greatly the miserie of the life present, when as we lie open continually vnto a thousand oppresions, where our refuge should be, there we oftentimes find discouragement. The profane and wicked man doeth deale with the innocent euен at his pleasure, the rich doth iniurie the poore, and when they come before the judges, or those that should minister iustice, euен as if the power were set vp for countenance of the vngodly, they are praised: the other are rebuked and checked.

Alas what shall men doe, where shall they seeke comfort? is not this life miserable? the world is euer full (and never more then at this day) of oppresions, injuries, wrongs, and violence, & the places of iustice that should right it, doeth often increase the same. Who is he that hath a peaceable minde, but had rather lose a great part, if he might choose, then goe to the law for to seeke iustice? how many are vndone, by going to law, how many are there which with long suite & great

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expences can never attaine to their right? If he be rich or mighty that doeth the wrong, let him take away house or land wrongfully, we doo account it follie for a meane man to sieke for justice. The world is miserably corrupted this way now, what remedie, what comfort? Doubtless none but that Solomon doth set forth in the next verse, I said in my heart, God will iudge the iust and the wicked: for there is a time for euery purpose, and ouer euery worke there. The Lord hath made all men to dwell together vpon the face of the earth: he is the iudge of the whole world: he is a iudge by nature: he is iustice and truth it selfe: he can not do wrong unto any: he must needes resue and deliver the iust, and execute vengeance vpon the wicked.

Herevpon Solomon doth gather, beholding withall the confusion of matters vnder the sunne, that there shall be a day of generall iudgement, when as all both good and bad shall come to their account, and when as euery man shall receive according to his deedes. It shall not ever be thus;

thus: Violence, oppression, and iniurie  
hade but their time, and there is also the  
time for iustice, as he saith, there is a time  
for every purpose. The last clause of this  
sentence may be taken divers waies, as  
namely, that the iudgement shall be ouer  
every worke: or thus, he that is ouer e-  
very worke is there. The sense both  
waies is true, and tendeth to one pur-  
pose: for it is most certaine by the scrip-  
tures that euery worke both good & bad,  
shalbe brought vnto iudgement, and it is  
God, who is ouer al, that shall iudge.

Let vs here learne of the wise man,  
when we behold oppression and peruer-  
ting of iustice, to gather assuredly that  
there is a time when things shal be set in  
better frame. Let vs not be cast downe  
& discouraged, when wee suffer wrong,  
and can find no help at the seats of iudge-  
ment, and places of iustice: for the time  
commeth when the high iudge will take  
our cause into his hand. Because mat-  
ters now go so farre awrie, be sure there  
is a day appointed for better order. It can  
not stand with Gods iustice that mat-  
ters

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ters should thus go clere away.

The wicked do not reason thus : but because the Lord doth let them alone, and men do escape with foule fates , they be the bolder, euен as if God did not regard the thing at all . This I say is a wrong collection , for that God now winketh at oppression, and at y perverting of iudgement , it is a strong reason to proue that he hath set a time vnto whiche he doth reserue all causes , wee shall all come there both the oppressor and the oppressed. Let vs proced to that whiche followeth: I said in my heart concerning the order of the children of men , that God hath giuen them dignitie , and to see to , they are beastes to themselues. This sentence is hard & difficult, by reason of some words in it , whiche may bee construed divers waies, and therefore no meruaile though it be vnderstood diversly.

But to let passe how it is translated in others, I will shew the cause whyp I take it thus, as I haue set it downe. First, here is one word , Dibrath whiche in the Psal.

Psal. 50. 110. is vsed for order : in this sentence of the

the Psalme, the Lord hath sworne and will not repent, thou art a priest for euer after the order of Melchisedech. This I take here to signifie the state and order of þ children of me. Here is an other word, & that is Barar, which signifieth to choose, to purge, to declare. I take it here in the first sence or the second, that God hath chosen men or purged thē: that is to say, he hath set them vp & adorned them with dignitie and honour, and yet to see to they be beasts to themselues. For choise men, set vp in dignitie, are called in the holy scripture Berurim, which cometh of the same word Barar. And the Scripture saith Psal. 49. Man is in honour, but shall not continue, he is like the beasts that perish. So then touching the state or order of the children of men, God hath given them dignitie and honour, but yet they be but as the beasts to themselues, as he sheweth by reasons afterward. This is spoken to pull downe the pride and loftines of mans nature, which doth so glory of an excellencie here in þ world. For looke wel vpon it, and we shall see,

that

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The sixth Sermon.

that this honour and dignitie doth not cō-  
tinue , but man becommeth euē as the  
beasts. The beasts haue no order among  
them, they haue no magistracie , no seate  
of iustice or such like . But the stronger  
do oppresse the weaker, the wild do pray  
vpon the tame, there is no place of refuge  
or succour among them.

Among men, this is a goodly dignitie,  
a goodly order, that God gineth the civill  
power , princes and iudges , and men of  
honour . There are lawes, there be or-  
ders , there is authoritie to restrayne  
wrongs and oppressions , that they may  
not be as y beasts to deuour one another.  
Yet do they partly in this become beasts  
to themselues, when the stronger do push  
the weaker , and when the seat of iudge-  
ment doth vphold wickednes . Men are  
cruell and sauage beasts one to an other  
many waies: but chiefly in death their  
dignitie doth vanish , and they differ not  
from the beasts that perish, as I alledged  
before, Psalm. 49.

Therefore he saith, the condition of the  
children of men , and the condition of the  
beasts,

beasts, is even as one condition to them: as the one dieth, so dieth y<sup>e</sup> other, for they haue all one breath, and there is no excellency of man aboue the beast, for al is vanitie. All go to one place (saith he) all was of the dust, and all shall returne to the dust.

Thus we see hee proueth them notwithstanding their dignitie, to be as the beasts, because the euent falleth out to be all one, no difference at all appearing. To day a iudge, a ruler, a myghtie king, to morrow all one in condition with the vilest beast. Both die alike, age, or some sicknesse or hurt, doeth cause the bodie to pine and languish, strength faileth, they abhorre meate, and yeld vp the breath. The same also is a like, for both haue no streis to draw in the aire, both man and beast gaspe, and yeld vp the same after one sorte: the beast doeth rotte and turne to dust, & so doth the man, for both were made of the dust, and both returne to the dust. In all these here is as he saith, no excellencie of man aboue the beast, for all is vanitie.

Thus

## The sixth Sermon.

Thus we see man is in honour, but doth not continue, he is like the beasts that perish.

The holy Scripture when it will abate mans high stomake, doeth put him in mind, that his breath is in his nostrels, he is but dust and shall die, and returne to dust. Now because this foolish vaine glory that men haue in themselves and in the vanities of this world, cleaueth so fast, Solomon vgeth the matter very soore, when he maketh no difference at al, nor no excellencie of man aboue the beast.

Let men consider well of this, and it must needes make them lesse esteeme the glorie of this worlde. Now if they haue riches and be a stuppe or two in honour aboue other, it fareth with them as if they were of an other kindred, yea as if they were petie gods. But if it could enter into their mind to thinke, I haue honour and dignitie, and glorie here in the world. I am set vp aboue the common sort, but shal this differēce betwene me and them continue? Surelie no: I shall

shall be made equall with the basest men, yea which is more, I shall differ nothing at all from the vilest beast. I shall haue no excellencie aboue a dogge. His breath is as my breath, we draw in all one aire. Hée and I shall yeld it forth a like, I shall die as hée dieth. My carcasse is now deintly sedde, lieth losse, is decked with rich apparell, and is honoured: It shall bee as vile and as rotten and lothsome as his: weé both returne to dust, that bodie whiche now is honoured, within few dayes if a man come to it, he must stoppe his nose. Why do I then seeke to glorie my selfe in this vaine estate: Why do I not tread downe these vanities, and seeke the glorie that is of God:

I say if weé could with this noble king, enter throughly into such considerations, the hayne worlde shoulde not so bewitch vs, and carrie vs from God. For who is so foolishe to labour mosse for that, whiche within a short time can not make him differre from the bruite beastes:

But

## The sixth Sermon.

But it may be objected, that this is hard to say, there is no excellencie at all of man aboue the beast, when death com meth, seeing the beast doeth wholy perish: but man hath a soule which doth not die, but liueth, though the bodie turne to duff?

This obiection doeth Solomon prevent, when he saith, who knoweth the spirit of man, that it goeth vpward, and the spirit of the beast that it goeth downward to the earth? As if he shold say, though it be most certaine that man hath a spirite which dieth not with the bodie, but returneth to God that gaue it, (as he speaketh afterward in the last chapter of this booke,) and that the beast hath no other spirit or soul, but such as dieth with the bodie, yet this maketh no difference betwene them touching this present worlde. For whereby can any man gather, in the death of man, that he differeth or hath an excellencie aboue the beast? There be, it doeth not appeare: neither doeth it therefore touch the state of the world. Such as die in the Lord are ble

sed, and do in that respect farre excell the beast. But touching this world (about the vanitie and miserie wherof Solomon disputeth) there is no difference nor excellencie, nor priuiledge aboue the beast. For the men which haue imbraced this present world, they haue a soule in dede that liueth, but it were a thousand times better for them, if they had not, but did wholly perish as the beastes. Here is no colour of matter in this sentence, to up-hold the wicked opinion of those detestable monsters, which denies the immortallitie of the soule. When they alleadge this saying of Solomon, yee see it is but wrested.

Againe, here is no cause to moue vs, for feare least we should strengthen that wicked opinion, to take it that Solomon doeth here shew what hee iudged by humane wisdom: for humane reason hath not so iudged, that men differ nothing at all from beastes after death. The humane reason is so blinde, that it will not bee brought to make such a profe as this, that man doeth not differ from the beast,

## The sixth Sermon.

because all is vanitie, as we see he saith a  
little before in this discourse.

I say therefore it is out of all doubt a  
matter propounded by Solomon, through  
the due contemplation wherof, the proud  
and loftie mind of man may be brought  
downe, that he may thirst for a better e-  
state, and seeke it: that he may lesse regard  
these transitorie things, in which his con-  
dition doeth fall out very soone to be all  
one with the beastes. And here we may  
remember by the way, how abiect and  
base the proud mindes of men be which  
know not God. They be as loftie in con-  
ceit, as if all fortitude and magnanimitie  
were in them: yea they would seeme to be  
gloriosse, and yet looke well vpon the  
matter, and yee shall see they haue bowed  
downe themselves to a base condition  
when their heart is set vpon earthly glo-  
rie, which can not long lift them vp aboue  
the beast. In dede this is the valiant  
mind, to despise, to tread downe the vaine  
pompe of this world, to esteeme basely of  
things transitorie, to long for that blessed  
estate in which there shall no basenes ap-

proch.

proch. And in which it shall not be said, a man is in honour, and shal not continue, he is like the beastes that perish.

If the sonnes of great Princes, which are borne to honor and dignitie, should be so basely minded, as to let goe all regardes of their birth and place, and chose rather to be Shepheards, or Plowmen, it would be wondered at. But when God calleth vs to a farre greater glorie, and wee es-  
teeme it not, but set our mindes vpon the beggarlie pompe of this world, it seemeth no maruaile at all, yet the trueth is, that these latter are much more to be wond-  
ered at, then those other, they be baser min-  
ded. Let vs goe for ward, it followeth in  
the next verse, Therefore I see there is  
nothing good, but that a man doe re-  
joyce in his workes, because that is his  
portion; for who shall bring him to see  
what shalbe after him? He hath vittered  
this divers times, in which he affirmeth,  
that there remayneth no good vnto man  
of all his trauaile after death. To reioice  
in his workes, to take part while he li-  
ueth, is all the portion that he can haue of

## The sixth Sermon.

things vnder the sunne, for he shall never be brought againe so much as to haue the sight of any thing that shalbe after him. God hath ordeyned that we shal haue the vse of his creatures to serue for present necessitie, which we may reioyce in, not like gluttons, epicures, or riotous folke, but by them to haue our hearts lifted vp to the gener.

Mans nature is not onely able to doe the former, namely, gluttonie and excessse: but is prone therunto. But this later is the speciall gift of God, as hee taught vs in the second Chapter: such as haue not this, haue no portion at all of the riches & goods which they possesse, bee they never so wealthie: Unless we will account it a portion which differeth not from that which bruite beastes doe equally enjoy. For they take pleasure in sweet pastures <sup>sup</sup> they haue their delights. Contrariwise, such as haue a portion in the creatures, <sup>it be</sup> reioyning in them, as by them being lifted vp to reioyce in God, are not hindered, <sup>ker</sup> though they haue little. For it is writte, <sup>is</sup> a small thing which the righteous haue,

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is better then the great reuengeves of the Psal. 37.  
wicked, Psal. 37.

It followeth, I turned and behelde all the oppressions that are wrought vnder the sunne, &c. I noted vnto you that he dealeth with the oppressors, and oppressed: and having first propounded what he beheld the state of mans life to be in that former, now hee commeth to that other. When he saith he beheld all the oppressions that are wrought vnder the sunne, it confirmeth that which I taught you before, namely, that it was not with bodily sight, but with inward contemplation of minde: he did finde that euен vnder the best kings it coulde not be auoyded, but that in the kingdome there woulde be oppressions. For such as be put in trust to execute iustice, doe scorne swerue, the corrupt nature of man is such: then how can it be auoyded where a wicked Prince is set vpon the thronne? If the king himselfe be as a devouring Lion, what wil his officers and ministers be? This did Solome, non vew throughlie, and therfore saith he, turned and beheld all the oppressions

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that are wrought vnder the sunne.

We may learne by his speache here, when he saith, I turned and beheld, for it doeth vs to witt, that he fixed and bent the eyes of his minde vnto whollie, for the time, vpon the oppressing that are wrought. He applied all the force of his wisdom and knowledge to search this thing aright: and so did he at al other mat ters which he made triall of.

This was a wise mans part, the eyes of a foole are in the corners of the world, as he saith in the proverbe. He looketh all abroad, vpon all thinges at once, and so hath no depplye into any thing. For as it is in thinges subiect vnto our vident sight, when we looke with our eyes vpon all, we see nothing but supercially or in a glimme vpon the outes, so wli with the minde, for the consideration of euerie particular vaine and miserie in the state of this life.

The wise heart velenly and takeith note of every thing particularly. But the foole goeth hooly all, looketh round about, never firtheth his eyes from one to another.

another, to fasten them, and so knoweth nothing perfectly. God hath set menne in the world to be taught by all things, but the most are wonderfull negligent, not onely about things here spoken of, but also in the holy word of God.

Many are content to reade now and then at their pleasure certaine chapters sleightly, but who are they or where are they almoſt, which do labour in daede to ſind out the will of God from point to point? who doth giue hirfelfe with daece meditation to ſtudie the word of God? Is it meruable though all be ful of ſcories, if we reſpect true wiſdom? we haue no promife to be wiſe vnto God, unleſſe we ſearch for wiſdom, and digge for it as for hidde treasures Prou. 3. We diligent Prou. 2.  
then brethren; and God will bleſſe you: ye ſhal leſpie al the vanitie of this world: ye ſhall be delivered from it, and ſind the way to true bleſſednes. God hath promiſed to bleſſe the diligent, ſeke and ye ſhal find. Perhaſe we conſider what he found touching oppreſſion, Behold (ſaith he) the teares of the oppreſſed and none com-

## The sixth Sermon.

forteth them : and lo the strength is of the hand of those that oppresse them, and none comforteth them.

What a miserable condition is this, that oppressions are alwaies so many & so grieuous , and none to comfort the oppressed. Where there is strengthe might, there they wrong the weaker , even as the stronger beastes doe push and harme the febler : there be multitudes of poore men in the world, whose wifes and chil-  
dren, through oppression of the rich, haue scarce bread to put in their mouths , or rags to hang vpon them . The landlords set such rent of their grounds , that they labour and toile like horses , spend their strength, and can get nothing , which bee the tenaunts . This is a cruelt part , for they doe euен as it were, eat the flesh, and drinke vp the bloud of these and of their children . And yet there is greater crueltie, they plucke away from the widow & fatherles that little which was left them . If there be but a cow, they will haue it : let there be two or three poore babes, frē whose mouthes they snatch away y milke,

it

it doth not move them. If there be a little  
comoditie of house or land, what devises  
they haue to wind it in, and to wryng it  
away: they goe as nigh as to the beddes  
which they lie vpon.

This savage crueltie exercised every  
where vpon the weake by those that are  
strong, doth cause many a salt teare to be  
shed. The smart is great, they may weep  
to ease their hart a litle, but there is none  
to comfort them. The Lord doeth looke  
upon it, and will be revenged. For if this  
shal be heard, Goe ye cursed into euerla-  
sting fire, prepared for the devill and his Math. 25.  
angels, for when I was hungry ye gaue  
me no meat, &c. How shall they escape  
which do snatch away the meat from the  
hungrie: take haed all you that hold away  
other mens houses & lands, because they  
be not able to wage law with ye. Take  
haed you that grind the faces of the poore,  
and gripe them with harde bargaining.  
Take you haed also, that accept the per-  
son of the mighty, or iudge for reward.

The iudge of the whole world doeth  
lay vp al these things in store against the  
day

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Iam. i.

day of vengeance. Lay aside your crueltie; Visite the fatherlesse and widow in their distresse, deale your bread to the hungry, helpe them to their right which suffer wrong, and then shall ye haue none of these teares of the oppressed against you. Which Solution beheld under the sunne: Princes and great men consider whose place ye are in. Is it not Gods seat? hath not he said ye are gods? ye ought to be like him? He both not abhorre the poore? And is the father of the fatherlesse, and indig-  
gry the widewes case? He hath set ye upp  
to be eyes to the blind, legs to the lame,  
armes to the weake! He giveth ye in  
charge, open thy mouth to the dumbe,

Pro. 31. Deale in the cause of the poore, deliver the oppressed: judge the fatherlesse and widow: break the tables of the wicked, and deliver the prey out of his teeth. 101 3d  
34. If ye would recule this vndoubtedly, it  
should not be said, I beheld the teares of  
the oppressed, & there is none to com-  
fort them. The rich men in men of com-  
tenance are let in by and ty poore! They  
scorne, the poore man is th' last back: some  
gave

gentleman doth take away his land from him, to his utter undoing, he is not able to go to the law; he would make his case knowne to the prince, who will do it for him? he may well go and weepe in a corner to himselfe. If he had any thing left he were euill as good give it away as seeke remedie, bales he haue some friend. How wod thy a matter were it, if princes & great judges would make the entrance for poore men easie unto them, by appointing such as should attend for that purpose, and that they would not be wearie of the trouble. It would stay many oppresions, for they would be ashamed to do them, vntill they thought it should come to be scathid: and so shalld God be highly pleased. I crow di as a dilded, coldidors. But to know what the state of the world hath lener bene concerning this lette vs heare what so lomon addoth. Wherfore I praised the dead, which are now dead, laboure the living, which are yet aliuyn. And I account him better then them both which hath not yet beene, for he hath not seene the euill works which are

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are wrought vnder the sunne. He doth  
estime the miseries, so many & so great  
which fall vpon men by opprestions, that  
he commendeth the state of the dead, aboues  
the case of those which remaine aline: yea  
he doeth account him best at ease which  
hath not beeene. The dead, though they be  
now rid and freed, and in that respect bet-  
ter then the living, yet because they haue  
passed through the calamities of this life,  
and borne their burthen of them, he ma-  
keth them inferiour to those which are  
unborne, because they haue not seene the  
evill worke that is wrought vnder the  
sunne.

31 He setteth this life before vs, as a sea  
or goule full of stormes, inquietnes and  
troubles, death is as it were the hauen &  
landing place, where menne are set frē.  
But they are most at ease which never  
came in it, they haue not felt, nor tasted  
of these bitter blasts, nor been tossed with  
vs. This being true, what shal me thinke  
of those which seeke felicitie and good in  
this world? But it may be said, how can  
this be true which Solomon speaketh?

The

The wicked goeth through many trou-  
bles in this world, yet when he is dead &  
freed from them he is not in better, but in  
worse case, seeing assuredly, that he is da-  
ned. The godly, although of all other the  
most miserable in this world, (if we re-  
spect only y<sup>e</sup> waight of afflictions) yet they  
be in ioy after death, are happy that euer  
they were borne, & therefore it can not be  
said, that he which hath not yet b<sup>e</sup>ene is  
better then they. I answere, y<sup>e</sup> Solomon  
doth not respect any thing in this copart-  
son, but that which is vnder the sun. He  
doeth proue that vnder heauen, there is  
naught but vanitie.

He doeth not in this place medle with  
that which is out of the world: that is, ei-  
ther with salvation or damnation. We see  
the men that seeke god in y<sup>e</sup> world, doe set  
those respects also aside: so that he dealeth  
now within their compasse. Is this true,  
that respecting y<sup>e</sup> miseries of this world,  
the dead be in better case then the living,  
& he that hath never b<sup>e</sup>ene borne better at  
ease then they both? Is it not then also  
true, that he said, vanitic of vanities, all is  
vanitic,

## The sixth Sermon.

yanitie, there is no profit to a man of all his trauaile ynder the sunne? Why then doo men set their heart vpon this misera-  
ble life? what will they find in it? The next sentence setteth forth ano-  
ther euill which might make this life vn-  
pleasant, when he saith, I saw all trauaile  
and al perfection of the worke, that this  
is the enuie of a man from his neigh-  
bor, this also is vanitie, and affliction of  
spirite. Wee haue heard how miserable  
he iudged this life by reason of oppres-  
sions: now hee speaketh of that which ad-  
deth further miserie. It is but a small  
thing which man hath allotted him here,  
even to reioyce in his workes, and yet he  
can not enjoy the same quietly, or without  
peration. God geneth skill in all maner  
of workes which are wrought vnder the  
sunne. The greater giftes he geneth, the  
greater perfection doe they shew in their  
workes that haue them. It is ( after a  
sort) to be iuriuous to God himself, whe-  
men doe not gene the due praise unto such  
men that doe so excell in giftes of skill.  
They shold be honoured, and haue mat-  
ter

fer to reioyce, but they be enuyed. The more perfect they be, the more doth enuie repine. This springeth from vainglorie, and couetonousnes withall.

Men would be praysed, and haue the cheeze fame and profit of their science. If God haue geuen more perfection vnto an other, it greeueth them, they depreue, and disgrace all that ever they can. From hence doe flowe sooth many annoyances, which make this life greeuous.

To conclude then (beloued) ye may see also out of this portion of Scripture that I haue now handled, that the vanitie and vexation of this life is very great, & shall euer continue. God geue vs grace to consider of it, and to be so much further deu-  
liven from things transitorie. Amen.

*The end of the sixth*

*Sermon,*



## ~~The seventh Sermon.~~

## Ecclesiastes. Chap. 4.

## Verse. 5.



He Foole foldeth to-  
ther his handes, and ea-  
teth his owne flesh.

6 One handful is better with quiet, then two handfuls with toyle and vexation of spirite.

7 And I turned, and beheld a vanitie  
vnder the sunne.

8 There is one , and there is not a se- i  
conde , also he hath neither sonne nor  
brother, and yet there is no ende of all  
his labour , also his eye is not satisfied w  
with riches : and for whom doe I travell  
and defraud my soul of good? This also al  
is vanitie , and this is an euill afflicti- th  
on. pi

9 Two are better than one, because <sup>for</sup> <sub>they</sub>

they haue a good reward for their labor

10. And if they fal, one lifteth vp his fellow: but woe be to him that is alone which falleth, seeing there is not a secōd to lift him vp.

11 Also, if two lie together they haue heate, but howe shoulde one haue warmth?

12 Also, if one be to strong for him, two shall withstand him, and a threefold corde is not easilie broken.

13 A poore childe that is wise, is better then an old king which is a fool, and knoweth not to be admonished any more.

14 For he commeth out of the prison to raigne, when this is borne poore in his kingdome

15 I saw also al the living which walk vnder the sunne, with the second childe, which standeth vp in his steade.

16 There is no end of al the people, also of any that hath ruled ouer them, those that come after wil not reioyce in him: this also is vanitic and affliction of spirit.

He foole foldeth  
his handes, &c.

This king goeth  
forwarde in ope-  
ning the vanities  
of this life, which  
make it miserable

The last time was  
heard what he beheld among the childre  
of men touching oppressions, in which  
they shewe themselves so cruell beastes  
one to another, that they make þ state of  
the living worse than of the dead. Also, of  
the enuie which lighteth upon those that  
are wise, perfect, and prosperous in their  
workes. In these he hath included many  
of the harmes which one doeth to ano-  
ther. It were enough to make our pre-  
sent estate nought, if there were no more  
but the iniurie in body, goods and name,  
which we lie open unto continually, and  
must beare from others. But this is not  
all: for if there were none to hurt vs, we  
are ready to annoy our selues, and that  
many

many waies. These sortes are here brought in, which are their owne foes, and which beape miseries vpon them selues: the slouthfull person, the misera ble niggard, and the wilfull conceited man. He beginneth with the slouthfull, because he had spoken of the perfection of trauaile in the former verse. Let a man trauaile with wisdom and perfection, he shal be enaied: let him cease & be slouthfull, it is his destruction, as we shall vnderstand by that which is here taught. There be harmes on every side. The foole foldeth his hands, this is spoken of the slouthfull or idle person. It may be demaunded how we know that he speaketh this of yidle, seing he doth not name him: he saith not y slouthfull, but the foole foldeth his hands. The foole cōprehendeth mo then sluggards & idle persons: I an swer, that the description is of a sluggard very plaine & manifest. For wheras God bath laid this vpon Adam and all his sonnes, In the sweat of thy browes thou shal eat bread. Gen. 3. And he that will not labour, must not eat. 2. Thess. 3. But

## The seuenth Sermon.

hath also givien hands to that purpose. He that worketh is said to lay to his hands, & the works are called the works of our hands. Contrariwise, he that is idle is said to fold together his hands. It may then be demanded why he doeth not name the flaggard, but vse so generall a name as foole? It is for speciall causes, for the idle which foldeth his handes, is almost a foole alone. Againe: In the proverbes he saith, the flaggard is wiser in his owne concept, then seven men that can render a reason. He taketh him selfe the wisest of many, that he doeth spare his body, when other take paines, and he is deceived, for it is to his great miserie and destruction. The holy ghost doth of purpose set him forth to be cleane contrarie vnto that which he boasteth of, and that doth nuppe sore.

For so dealeth S. Paule with those which let goe wholesome doctrine, and give themselves to vaine speculations. He saith they be vainerly puffed vp and knowe nothing. 1.Timoth.6. What can grieve such men more, then when the

# The seuenth Sermon. - I I I

do looke to be accounted the wised of all,  
and to knowe more then any (he saith)  
they be puffed vp and knowe nothing. So  
the sluggard seemeth to be very wise, and  
therfore he noteth him by the word sole,  
as by his proper name, for he hath a chie  
place among fowles, ca there be any grea  
ter folly, then to bring so great miserie  
vpon himself, that he eat his owne flesh,  
v<sup>e</sup>e all doo know that it is a great ex  
tremite which canseth a man to bite and  
eat the flesh from his owne armes. With  
such doth he compare the idle, because he  
doth devoure himselfe. It will be said, it  
hath beene seldome or never heard that a  
mane hath lien stil w<sup>th</sup> slouth, and fed vp<sup>th</sup> his  
own flesh. We may not so understand So  
lomon, that the sluggard doth in ded eat  
his own flesh w<sup>th</sup> his teeth, but devoureth  
himselfe with such miserie, that it is all  
those one as if he did. For as he speakeþ in the  
and Proverbes, yet a little sleep, yet a litt  
le slumber, yet a little folding of the hands,  
and together (there we may see who the sole  
it canis which is described by folding his hands)  
they and thy pouertie commeth like a tranc

## The seuenith Sermon.

102, and thy necessarie like an armed man:  
by this he telleth that pouertie doth come  
vpon the sole that foldeth his hands vnto  
wares, and necessarie taketh hold of him  
so strongly, that it can not be withstood.  
For the trauelloz commeth vnto wares, &  
the armed man commeth strongly.

He saith also that the sluggard shalbe  
clothed with raggis, & in very deed what  
followeth idlenes, but shamefull begge-  
rie? he doth want, he doth hunger, he doth  
vse deceipt & cosenage, yea he doth steale.  
He commeth to the stockes, to the prison,  
to the whippe, and to the gallowes, his  
wife and children are beggars. Doth not  
this man now eate vp his owne flesh? is  
not this a right sole, may he not be so cal-  
led as by his proper name? the world  
doth swarne full of these soles, they be  
in euery countrie, in euery citie, in euery  
village, yea it is certaine they be almost  
in euery familie, and many together in  
some house. For many haue a glory to  
bring vp their children in idlenesse and  
vaine pleasures, this is gentrie among a  
number. From hence spring so many  
ragged

## The seuenth Sermon. 112

ragged robes, so many russians, & chevans  
as be now a daies. at ellis neare cheyne

Let all men take heed and be bound-  
ed by this, that the fule foldeith his handes  
and eateth up his owne meat. Bring up  
your children to labour, and honest tra-  
uaile, rich mens sonnes thinke it a dif-  
grace, and an affaintnes to their bloud,  
to do any honest worke. If he be a gen-  
tleman, though he haue not two grates  
by the yeare to spend, yet he may not la-  
bour. He shall spend his time in plea-  
sures from morning to night, from the  
beginning of the weeke to the end, and all  
the yeare long, as any pastours grotheith  
in season. These take not themselves to  
be of his house to whom it was said, In  
the sweat of thy browes thou shalt bate  
bread. They come of greater houses then  
to worke with their handes, or to giue  
themselves to honest trauaile or studie.

An other sort haue bane soldiers: a  
man shall heare them swears great othes,  
& with him hanged, that will ever worke  
again after he hath once setted that way:  
these will follow harlots and the dice,

## The seventh Sermon.

(their handes be not folded vp from such things) and can also take a purse by the high way side. Other there be which haue handes brought vp at home, but yet the plow and the cart, & their occupations be to meane for them, then haue wearie of them, and they must be serving men, and in that course of life they laiter and are improfitable. If they ware old or be turned out of service, they be in miserie, they begge or steele. Thus we may see, that there be many of these foole which sold vp their handes, and eate their owne flesh. It is (belommed) a cruell thing for a man to deuour hym selfe, to eate vp the flesh of his wife and childe: and this death he that is clouthfull, because God hath ordeined that by the labouer of our handes we must nourishe our selues & our families. God hath set us here for a fewe daies to labour truslie and painfullie for our liuing. Hane care of this ordinance, and remember what is said of the clouthfull. One handfull is better with quiet, than two handfulls with toyle and vexation.

of spirite.

This sentence may be vnderstood two waies: for either Solomon setteth it downe as a doctrine, and then the sence is this, that it is better to haue a smaller portion of riches with moderate care and trouaile, then to haue great abundance with toyle and vexation of spirite; and that is very true, and then is it set downe as the meane betwene the slouthful and the miserable djudge, spoken of next: or els he speakeþ in the person of the slothfull, shewing how he perswadeth himself vnto idlenes, that he had rather farre thinly and take his ease, then to weare himselfe with labour, for to get riches. It is a true saying, when it is applied agaist an ouer greedis desire of riches: yet is it a bad reason, as the sluggard vseth it, to his purpose. For, he carrieth himselfe by it, not vnto moderate care and trouaile to prouide things necessarie, but in deede into idlenes, and beggerie. *W<sup>e</sup>s* saith, *One handfull, (that is, a little,) is better with quiet rest, than two handfulls with labour: But he hath not that*

one

## The seuenth Sermon.

one handfull at his will, for the sluggard lusteth, and hath nothing, Prou. 6. Let it not seeme strange, that the idle doe abuse a true saying to colour their laziness: ye shall finde it so in other vices. The prodigall ruffian beholdeth the covetous niggard, and what saith he? There is a miserable caitife, he maketh his money his god. I will never (saith he) be a slave to my purse, I will make golde my servant, and so he poureth forth so long as he hath any, and that riotously, where there is no need. The covetous man looketh vpon him, O (saith he) yonder beast followeth his pleasure, he is an unchristian, he is worse then an Infidell ( saith the Scripture ) which prouideth not for his familie.

Thus doe men with true sentences seeke to colour their sinnes, and are carried into extremities, and so doeth the idle scold here. He seeth men labour, and take paines for their sustenaunce, and to provide somewhat for their children. O (thinketh he) these are foolish men, they were & wearie themselves, I had rather haue a cup

## The seuerith Sermon. 114

cup of beere and a morsel of bread with ease, then to haue all their good cheare with the paines which they take. This no doubt, is a sweet reason vnto flesh and bloud, which shunnethe labour, and is prone vnto idlenes and luste. It canseth thousands to seek easie occupations. Wherefore, withstand this temptation, remember that God hath laide vpon every man that he shall trauaille carefully in his vocation. As no man ought to set his heart vpon riches, so ought all to beware of slouthfulnes, for it is a follie that bringeth great calamitie in the end.

Thus haue we seene one sorte of men that plague themselves: now followeth another. I behelde a vanitie vnder the sunne, there is one, and there is not a second, &c. He describeth such a man as punisheth himself with extreme care and labours to heape vp riches, and can never haue his eye satisfied: yea such a one as is a niggard to his owne bellie, and doeth euen grudge to bestow any good thing vp on himselfe. When a man hath a wife and children, bretheren or kinred, there be

## The seuenth Sermon.

bee some bondes of naturall affection, which may moue him to lay by somwhat to geue vnto them. When it is so, there seemeth to be a iust excuse, (as in dede it is commēdable where measure is kept) but this is to be wondered at, that there shoulde be so cruell a sicknes in our nature, that a man being alone, having no sonne, nor any kinred to prouide for, is yet so insatiable, that he can never think he hath enough, but doeth continuallie whippe and torment himself w<sup>th</sup> thoughts and sorrowful cares, and with paines and nigardly pinching.

He doeth also geue vs to understand, how blinde and foolish this man is. For, he hath not the wisdome to thinke in him selfe, for whom doe I toile, and defraude my soule of god? If a man could but reason thus in his heart, I haue plentie of riches, I haue no childe, I haue no neare kinsman, for whom doe I torment my selfe with care to get riches? Why shold not I enjoy part of them my selfe? It would a little ease him of hys burthen. Peraduenture it will be said, there bee few

## The seuenth Sermon. 115

fewe thus miserable. If a man woulde  
seeke, he shoulde hardly finde tennie such  
in a whole shire: why then doeth Solo-  
mon bring it in to declare the miserie of  
this life, seeing it lighteth but vpon hers  
and there an odde person? I aunswere,  
that in dede there be fewe to be found  
which haue no childe, nor nigh kinred,  
and yet are extreme needie, and of a mi-  
serable nigarblines. But we must un-  
derstande that he speaketh of a common  
infestation. It is in many thousandes, but  
he doeth declare it, chusing such a person  
to set it forth in, as in whom the disease  
is broken forth, and hath nothing to co-  
uer it.

Shall we thinke, that to want childe  
and kinred, doe brede this vile maladie,  
nay that doeth but detect it: As the world  
doeth swarne full of idle fooles, so is it  
certaine, that there be thousands of these  
miserable hard men, which moyle in the  
world as base drudges, to get and heape  
up riches for their chilzen, which if they  
had no chilzen, yet their disease woulde  
remayne with them. He saith this is va-  
nitie

## The seuenth Sermon.

nitie, and this is an euill affliction. And doubtles who can deny but that the life of such men is most miserable.

Now because this miser, though he be among men, yet liueth (if it may bee called a life) vnto himselfe, as he saith, he is one, and his minde cannot admit any fellow in that he possesseth, in which hee pincheth his owne bellie, and saith it nay euен when it cryeth vnto him for somewhat. He wil set forth further euils and inconueniences of his life. by shewing the good which commeth of the contrary, that is, the societie and felowship of life. Two are better than one, they can doe more work, and many works together which one cannot, and so they haue a good reward for their labour.

There be many commodities in laboring together. Companions are in societie, if one of them fal, his fellow liftest him vp. But he which is alone and doth fall, wo be to him, there is no helpe for him. If two lie together they are warm, but one alone can not be warme, if any doe set vpon one and would be to strong for

for him, two will be able to resist: and a threafold cord is not easily brokē. Where men are linked together in societie and friendship, they be strong and can not easily be injured. By these his meaning is to shewe the manifold mischises which the worldly drudge coueting to live by himselfe, doth fall into.

Let vs note thus much, that men are dissoiate and live a sunder, grædineſſe of wealth is a great cause of it. They can not abide that one should haue any gaine by an other, they will bestow nothing vpon any to noxish lone. And thus they draw euils vpon themſelues, and make their life full of miseries. Where he saith of the worldly drudge, that there is no end of all his labour, also his eye is not ſatiſfiſed with riches, though he haue neither ſonne nor brother, I feare many wil take none but ſuch to be couetous: leaſt any ſhould be deceipted in taking this to be the onely deſcription of a couetous man, I will ſtand ſomewhat vpon it. In deed it is the deſcription of a couetous man, but yet of one that is in a deepe degré of coue-

## The seuenth Sermon

conetousnes, yea of an extremit miser and  
dʒudge. A man may come certaine de-  
grees short of him, and yet be conetouse,  
and so conetouse that the Scripture cal-  
leth him an ʒvolater, making riches his  
trust, and so his God, he shal not enter in-  
to the kingdome of heauen.

First, if a man haue many children  
for which he is bound to provide by his  
trauaile, and to teach them to worke, yet  
to haue an insatiable desire for riches, to  
soyle without end, is condemned, it is a  
savage thing, to live (which many doe,)  
without societie of neighbours, as ye shall  
see many so conetous that they admit no  
companions. I will say further, though  
he do not defraud his soule of good, but  
doe feed of them, yea though he come to be  
after a sort satisfied and haue enough, yet  
he may be conetouse: for conetousnesse is  
not onely in the grādie desire of hauing  
more, or in pinching the bellie, but chie-  
ly in trusſing in riches. God hath giuen  
vs our life, he hath commaunded vs to  
trauaile for sustenance, but yet so as that  
we depend vpon him, and know that he  
doeth

both feed vs, & maintaine our life. Faith in him, is the keye of our store house, if we stay vpon riches, as though our life were maintained by them, be guiltie of covetousnes.

Our Saviour saith, take heed and beware of covetousnesse, Luke 12. and then for example bringeth in a man, whose garners brought forth such stoare, that he had mete roome to lay it vp: hee pulled downe his barnes, and builded greater, and then he said, Soul, thou hast enough laide vp in store for many yeres, eate, drinke, and be merte. Thou soule, this night shall they take away thy soule, &c. Here is one ye see, doeth eate, drinke, and is merte, hath enough for many yeres, and yet condemned as covetous. The wretched drudge here described by Solomon, goeth farre beyond this, and yet this is not excused.

We haue now in our daies, it may be, but here and there one, which fitly in every respect agreed with this description. For though there be many that cannot be satisfied with goddes, that never rest

## The seuenth Sermon.

copying, that robbe their own bellies, yet  
fewe of them be without children or kin-  
red.

Well, let it be they differ somewhat,  
yet they be but base d<sup>r</sup>judges. Of the last  
sort, that is, such as stay and trust vpon  
riches, there be infinites: for all are such,  
vntil God wooke in them the regenera-  
tion. Ye shall heare many say, I thanke  
God I am not covetous, If I were sure  
to haue inough but to liue withall. I  
mouelde haue lesse care, and take less  
paines. It is in some sence, and as some  
speake it, as much as to say, if I were  
sure that Mamon my God were so  
great to keepe me, I would wish no more.  
These men are afraid their riches will  
not suffice them and their posteritie. For  
they imagine that their children can not  
liue but by them.

It wil here be objected, that it is law-  
full and requisite to make prouision, and  
to lay vp for the children: and dayly ex-  
perience doeth teach, that such as haue li-  
tle or nothing left, doe ful ill. I answere,  
we must so lay vp, that we yet trust not

to the riches which be uncertainte, but to  
the living Lord. Our life dependeth up-  
on him, and so doe the liues of our chil-  
dren. And where it is said, they doe ful il  
which haue little or nothing left them,  
that is through vnbelieve. Is it maruell  
thouḡ the Lord suffer thousands of such  
as trust in riches, to be deprived of his  
blessing? They sayle of riches, and haue  
no God to stay vpon, and so doe pitfer and  
steale. But such as feare the Lord, and  
trust in him, shall be fed in the time of  
dearth. I haue beene young, and now am  
olde (saith the Prophet) yet saw I never  
the righteous forsaken, and his seed beg-  
gning their b̄read in vaine.

We see also many left in wealth that  
come to beggerie, and thousandes leste  
with nothing, which come to be wel able  
to liue. The parents which prouide that  
their children may haue prouision made  
for the flesh, to fulfill the lustes thereof,  
doe often geue them a knife to cutte their  
owne th̄roate. For they be idle, and riot-  
ous, and learn no good trade to get their  
living. If that be once spent which was

## The seuenth Sermon.

left, they must begge, or steale. Thus I haue stode somewhat largely, least any should take none to be covetous, but such as to whom in every respect the description here made by Solomon doeth agree.

We must now come to the third sort of men which do plague theselues. We haue dealt with the idle, & with the miserable covetouse: there remaineth that foole which is wilfull and conceipted. He describeth him in these wordes, that knoweth not to bes admonished any more. He hath such an opinio of his owne wisdome, and is so addicted to follow his owne braine, that let never so good counsell and admonition be given, he will not follow it. To make manifest how great the harme and damage is, which this man doeth draw vpon himselfe, and the mischieves and snares into which he falleth, Solomon doth ver y excellently set it forth by comparison.

This foole (for so he termeth him) let him haue all the aduantages that may be to such an one, yet shall they not deli-

uer

## The seuenth Sermon. 119

uer him. Age is a great matter to be regarded, and a great helpe to goe through, because it hath seene much. Riches and honour, and authoritie especially when they be with the greatest, as in kings, must needes doe exceeding much. But yet all these, that is, age, riches, honoꝝ, power or authoritie, shall not be able to deliuer the wilful conceipted foole, that knoweth not to be admonished, any more, from miseries and dangers, no though he be a king.

This is the cause why he saith, better is a poore child that is wise, then an old king which is a foole, and knoweth not to be admonished. And to shew how unresistable this foole casteth himselfe downe, or how little those things shall helpe, namely his yeares of experience, his riches, honour and power, he setteth one that wanteth all these in better case. For a poore child hath not experience: he wanteth power, for both tender age and i) let ouertie bring cōtempt. He hath nothing maynt wisdome, and that wisdome but of a deli- child, yet is he better then the other. Thus ue

Q I I The seuenth Sermon.

are we caught what mischiefe he doth bring  
follie doth carrie with it.

But I must here make the matter a  
little plainer. It will be said, what is  
this to declare the vanitie of life present.  
We shall seldom find such a king, and if  
it fall out oftenner, yet doeth it touch but  
a few. I answer first that when this is a  
king, all the whole realme doth smart for  
it. A wise king is a great blessing vnto all  
his subiects. On the contrary such a foole  
as is here described to be wilfull, and not  
knowing to be admonished by wise coun-  
sellors, doeth not onely harme himselfe,  
but wappeth all his kingdome in cala-  
mities. Great menne draw many with  
them, they fall not alone.

Secondly, I answeare that Solomon  
doth not meane to speake this onely of a  
king, but by way of comparison to in-  
clude all other degrees of men. For thus  
must we reason, If an old king that is a  
foole, and knoweth not to be admoni-  
shed any more, be through his wilful-  
nes & headie conceipt, in worse case then  
a pore childe, then other menne of lesse  
power

## The seuenth Sermon. 120

power and wealth, though they be noble and rich can not be safe, and how shal the inferiour sort of people then escape, I meane such as be wilfull?

Thus wæ see how it concludeth all sorts of me that be addicted to their owne will, and be so wise in their owne eyes, that they wil not be counselled. Now let vs see the difference betwéene them, by which is laid open the harme which he doth to himselfe. The one he saith (which is the poore childe) commeth out of prison to raigne, also the other (that is the king which is a soule, and knoweth not to bee admonished) is borne poore in his kingdome. Here is wonderfull difference: the one out of pouertie and affliction riseth vp into princely estate: the other doeth fall downe from his dignitie and power into calamities. We haue example of this in holy scripture, poore Ioseph was sold for a bond man, he was cast into prison, and from thence he was lifted vp to be ruler ouer all Egyp. Sedekiah did not humble himselfe before Jeremie the prophet at the mouth of the Lord, 2. Chron. 36. and

## The seuenth Sermon.

therefore he was cast downe. All wilfull  
fooles are not kings or princes, and so can  
not fall so high. But miserable are the  
plagues if we behold them, among the  
children of men, which are brought by  
wilfull conceipted fooles. It is a common  
sicknes, euery man almost is wise, and  
many are so full with the opinion of wi-  
dome, that they despise god councell, and  
god admonition. Looke what they set  
vpon, they go through with it in a yare,  
they plague others & vndon themselves,  
they be vnrecoverable.

For in the prouerbes Solomon spea-  
keth thus: If thou braie a foole in a mor-  
ter with a pestle among wheat, yet will  
not his foolishnes depart from him. This  
is to be vnderstood of the simple foole,  
there is no tawing that can bring him to  
any passe: instruction or stripes and all  
will not serue: a foole will be a foole still  
doe what ye can. In an other place of the  
Prouerbes, he saith thus, seest thou a man  
that is wise in his owne conceipt, there  
is more hope of a foole then of him. Pee  
see he leaueth little hope of a foole, when  
braying

## The seuenth Sermon. 121

braying in a monaster wil not serue. What hope is there then of this other kinde of foole, that is of him that is wise in his owne eies, whom he affirmeth to be the harder.

In this place he is called a foole, not that he is so selie as to want common sence, but because there is no greater folie then for a man to be wise in his owne eies. There be many of these fooles which be craftie fooles, they be deepe in fetches, suspicio[n]ous, vaine glozious, and proude. It is not possible with wordes to expresse what inconueniences and plagues these bring vnto countries, townes, and families where they beare sway: ye shall see them like vnto vnbrideled coltes. It is no meruaile though Solomon did behold these, and bring them in as a part of the plagues which are vnder the sun. There be an innumerable rabblement of idle fooles, which fold vp their hands, and eat their owne flesh. There be many misers which turmoile without end to heaps vp riches for they can not tell whom: they pinch their owne bellies. There be also

as

## The seuenth Sermon.

as we may well perceiue, if we looke vp, on the quarrels in law, and contentions among societies and cōpanies, that there be also very many conceipted fooles, all is full of fooles, the whole world is troubled with fooles. If there be mo sortes, they are not here mentioned, because these three are sufficient to be brought forth vp, on the stage.

Learne out of this place a necessary lesson, when ye be to choose any to bears office of gouernment, either alone or together with other, take heed that ye make not choise of such fooles, that is of such as be wise in their owne estimation. Such men will trouble all, the more wit they have the more daungerous ye shall finde them, the more wilfull and headie, and the further of from receyuing admonitiō. Men can liue no pleasant life but where there is the comfort of societie. Miserable therefore is the condition of this present life through the multitude of these three sortes of fooles, which are most noisome to themselves, and bring vexation vnto others.

Let

## The seuenth Sermon. 122

Let vs goe forward, I saw (saith he) al the liuing walking vnder the sun with the second childe which standeth vp in his steade. This is to be vnderstoode of the succession of kings, and great men of the earth. He spake of an olde king that is a foole, he doeth in contemplation behold him thrown down from his thzone, and forsaken of all his subiectes. He doth also behald them, euен all the liuing that walke vpon the earth, walking, or ioyning theselues with y newe king, whom he calleth the second childe that standeth vp in steade of that olde foole cast downe. He nameth him a childe, because he had made the comparison betwene an olde king that is a foole, and a poore child that is wise. The foole falleth from his honor, the childe commeth out of prison to raign. He calleth him the second, because he spake but of two.

What then? shall the state of this second childe, this wise king, be ought saue vanitie? Doubtles no. The sicknes of the people is such, that he shall not be delighted in but for a time. Those that come

## The seuenth Sermon.

come after will not reioyce in him. He saith, there is no ende of all the people, that is, no stop or stay, they never come to rest in any that haue bæne before the, which may be said, those that haue bæne rulers ouer them. The people delight stil in new kings, the sunne rising is honoured aboue the sunne setting: and so the wise childe comming to raigne, findeth nothing but vanitie, and soze vexation of spirite.

*The end of the seuenth  
Sermon.*





## The eight Sermon.

Ecclesiastes. Chap. 4.



Ake heede to thy feete Verse.17.  
 when thou goest vnto  
 the house of God, and  
 be readie to heare, ra-  
 ther then to offer the sa-  
 crifice of fooles, for they  
 perceiue not that they doe euill.

Chapter 5.



E not rash with thy mouth,  
 neither let thy heart make  
 hast to vtter a thing before  
 God, for God is in heauen,  
 and thou art vpon earth, therefore let  
 thy wordes be fewe.

2 For as a dreame commeth foorth  
 by the multitude of busynesse, so the  
 voice

221 The eight Sermon.  
voice of a foole by the multitude of  
wordes.

3 When thou vowest a vow to God,  
be not slack to pay it, for he is not de-  
lighted with fooles: perform that thou  
haſt vowed.

4 It is better not to vowe, then that  
thou ſhouldest vowe, and not performe  
itſelf vnto abſurd vowe.

5 Suffer not thy mouth to cauſe thy  
fleſh to ſinne, and ſay not before the an-  
gell that it is an irror, why ſhould God  
be angrie at thy voice, and deſtroy the  
worke of thy haſtēd hand.

6 For as in the multitude of dreames  
there be vanities: ſo in the multitude  
of wordes, but feare thou God.



Ecclesiastes Chap. 4. 5.



Ake heede to thy feet, &c.  
I did ſhew you (beloued in  
Christ) that the purpose of  
king Solomon in this booke  
is to teache me how to come  
to

to true blessednes. I did also note that it consisteth of two partes. So first he laboureth to draw men out of the wrong way, that is, from setting their heartes vpon any thing vnder the sunne, to seeke god therein. And this hath he dealt in from the beginning of the book vnto this place, as we haue seene.

Now by way of digression cutting of that, he toucheth the other, that is, v right course vnto blessednesse, which is in the true worship and feare of God. Our miseries be many and great, we seele it so; here is a holesome medicine to ease and cure vs, if we take heed and applie it well. There is none of vs so dull, but knoweth that felicitie is in god, he is the fountaine of happiness. We haue this also engrauen in our mindes, that such only are blessed as be in Gods famo, and therfore he must be worshipped, and his displeasure must be appeased.

These pointes Solomon doeth not touch at all, so he needed not: but how to seeke God aright, and to worship him as he may accept and be pleased, that is the thing

## The eight Sermon.

thing. For when it cometh to this, men faile and are foolish: they sēke him, they worship him, faine they would haue his anger appeased towards them, and be in his fauour, but they doe it so fondly, that they be never the better but the worse. Let vs therfore be taught here by Solomon, how to auoyde so intollerable a mischiefe, which we be all ready to run into.

Take heede to thy feet (saith he) whē thou goest to the house of God. When thou goest to sēke God, go to worshippe him. For God did appoint a special place for his worship, the Temple in Ierusalem. There he did so revalē him selfe, that hee was saide to dwell in it among his people: it was called his house. Here they were to offer gifts & sacrifices unto him. This Temple, and all the worship in ceremonies which was annexed unto it are taken away. For they were ordeyned but while Christ should come and finish our redemption, and therefore he said to the woman at the well, John 4. Woman belieue me, the hōly com-  
mest,

meth and now is, that neither at Ierusalem, neither in this mountaine ye shall worship the father. And againe he saith, that the true worshippers shall worship in spirite and truth. God reuealeth himselfe in all nations of the world, and men are to worship hym every where.

But yet neverthelesse these words do stand still vnto vs. We have Gods house where he is chiefly to be sought and worshipped, even the publike assembly. So God hath ordeyned shepheards and teachers to call the flocke together, & to feed them, Ephes. 4. There is speciall promise made of a blessing in the publike assemblies. Where two or thre are gathered together in my name, there am I in the middest of them. Matth. 19. The holy prophete of God did stagger when he beheld the prosperitie of the wicked, and the affliction of the iust, Psalm. 73. He could not tell how to be satisfied, vntil he went (as he saith) into the sanctuaries of God, there God resolued him of his great doubt. We must therefore goe to Gods house to seeke such blessings, and to worship

## The eight Sermon.

ship and praise God together. No man can be a right worshipper of God in private, that doeth not frequent the publike assemblies, where God speaketh to his people. We must all of vs, if we be wise, goe to Gods house: but that is not enough, marke what he giueth in precept: take heed to thy feete. This must needs be a borrowed speech: for we may not be so simple, as to understand it of the bodily feete. He doeth not set downe a charge to will men to looke how they step in the way when they goe to the Church. It is to be understood of the hart and mind, approaching to seeke and worship God.

It is therfore as much as to say, when thou wilt seeke God & worship him, take heed how thy heart and minde do come, for thou mayest goe awry. There is a right way, and there is a wrong way: if thou goe in the right way, thou art blessed: if thou goe in the wrong way thou doest marre all, thou shalt kindle Gods wrath against thee. Then next he doeth in generall expresse which is the right way, and which is the wrong. The one

is

ts in these words , draw neare to heare .  
 The other in these , rather then to offer  
 the sacrifice of fooles, for they perceiue  
 not that they do euill . Solomon doeth  
 in a word set downe that whiche Moses  
 and the Prophetes doo so much and so of-  
 ten urge , namely that the true worship  
 of God hath for the ground & foundation ,  
 sincere obedience . Harken to the voice of  
 the Lord thy God in all that he comman-  
 deth thee : thou shalt walke in his com-  
 mandements , his statutes , ordinances  
 and lawes . Thou shalt adde nothing vnto  
 his word , thou shalt take nothing ther-  
 fro .

In this place he saith , draw neare to  
 hearken ; that is to be vnderstood that we  
 must giue eare vnto y which God spea-  
 keth : for there ought to be no voice in  
 Gods house but his owne . It is high sa-  
 crilege for any other voice but Gods to  
 be uttered there . And Christ saith hee is  
 the true sheepeheard , his sheepe heare his  
 voice , but a stranger they will not heare .  
 The true and faithful pastors , when they  
 preach , uttering nothing but Gods word ,

## The eight Sermon.

it is not their owne voice, but his. There  
is one lawe giner, which is able to saue  
and to destroy, we haue then one soue-  
raigne Lord and King, even the King of  
Kings, and Lord of Lords: and first w<sup>e</sup>  
must begin with this, to give eare vnto  
his voice. We know not how to worship  
him: we may not worship him after our  
owne devises, for of such her saith, they  
worship me in vaine, teaching for doc-  
trines mens precepts, he hath prescribed  
fully and perfectly in every point, how  
we shall worship him.

We are therfore willed to draw neare  
to heare. For if we faile in this, and will  
be worshippers, not regarding to hear-  
ken, we faile in the foundation and goe  
awrie out of the waie in all that we do.  
Therefore herein, take heed to thy feet  
when thou goest to Gods house: to  
heare and not to do, is not worthy ought.  
Be ye doers of the word and not hearers  
only, deceiuing your selues. Jam. 1. And  
our saviour saith, if any heare my words  
& do them not, I will liken him to a man  
that buildeth his house vpon the sande,  
great

# The eight Sermon. I 27

great is the fall of that house, Matth. 7. Math.7.  
The holy Scripture doth not account it  
worth the name of hearing, unles a man  
be a doer.

Moreover, this is to be wel obserued  
when he saith, drawe neare to hearken,  
for it teacheth that the true worshippers  
must haue a readie and chearefull minde  
to hearken. Loue and reuerence to their  
God, doeth make them delight in his  
voyce, and not that onely, but the be-  
nefit which we receiue by his wo:de, he  
doeth beget vs by it, to be his children, as  
S. Peter saith. We are borne, not of mo:re  
tall, but of immortall seade, the wo:de of  
God which indureth for euer. Of his  
owne god will (saith S. Iames) hath he  
begotten vs with y: word of trueth: ther-  
fore let euery man be swifte to heare. By  
bearing the holy wo:rd, we become the  
sonnes and daughters of God. If we be  
swifte to heare, and keepe, happy are we.  
So our Saviour saith, Blessed are they  
that heare the wo:rd of God, and keepe it.  
To make this yet more plaine, why we  
should drawe nigh to hearken, I will

## The eight Sermon.

speake somewhat more of the new birth  
which is wrought thereby. We are all  
by nature the children of wrath, in as  
much as we be borne in sinne. All that  
is in vs is but flesh, that is to be crucified  
with the lusts and concupisences. This  
mortification of the flesh through the spi-  
rite, is called the putting off the old man.  
This is wrought by learning, God hath  
appointed his word to purge vs. All  
our uncleannesse is to be cleansed away  
by the pure word. Ignorance, heresie, er-  
rors, darkenes, and unbeliere, are expel-  
led by it.

¶ Then further, there is the true image  
of God to be set vp, which is called the  
putting on of the new man, which after  
God is created in righteousness and true  
holines. The blessed spirite of grace  
breathing life and all good thinges into  
our soules, doeth it by hearing the word.  
It is therefore the sweete food of our  
soules, the Preachers are called Shep-  
herds, which feede the Lords flock. We  
may well see there is no comming to seek  
God, and to worship him, but this way.

This

This is the right way, take heede to thy  
feet so; to walke in it, draw neare to har-  
ken. Learne by the word of the Lorde  
how thou mayst worship him aright.

I will come now to the other parte,  
which is the worshippe disallowed, called  
the sacrifice of soules. In olde time, be-  
fore the comming of Christ, God institu-  
ted many ceremonies & sacrifices, which  
did shadow things to come. These was  
the Church then to be exercised in. Not  
that he esteemed the doing of those out-  
ward things so much, or accounted his  
worship to consist therein; but he regar-  
ded the inward faith, and integritie of  
heart.

Those outward ordinances were but  
for helpe to further faith and true godli-  
ness. When they offered slayne beasts in  
sacrifice, Christ was represented, and  
withall, the offerer did declare his faith  
and repentance thereby. This was for-  
gotten, or not regarded of many, and so  
they offered their sacrifices, omitting the  
chiefe vse, as though they had done the  
Lord a pleasure. This we may see by

## 821 The eight Sermon.

Psal.50. the Psalm. 50. And many are the complaints of the prophets against such worshippers. They neglect the holy doctrine of God, and be ignorant and unskillfull in his waies, for which he calleth the soules in this place. He doth wish men to take heed of it, because these soules doe nothing but sinne, when they come to worship God. All that they doe is accursed and abominable, yea even their prayer's & whole worship, yet (he saith) they doe not perceive that they doe euill. Their blindnes to seeke God seemeth to themselves a goodly iewell, and that is one great part of their follie. Thus we see the sense of his wordes.

Now will I come to apply this doctrine more particularly, that we may know who they be that erre, & how miserable their estate is. And first I will beginne with the church of Rome and all Papists. This doctrine doth ouerthrow them, for this being true, they can not be the Church of God. There is no drazing neare to hearken to the word of God among them, they haue banished it and buried

buried it. God speaketh not in their synagoges, but the deuises of men are set vp: therefore all their worship is the sacrifice of soules. They do sinne, they be abominable and accursed in all their doings.

It is a vaine excuse when they alledge, we worship none but the true God, we worship Christ. When we see it plaine that a man may goe to Gods owne house where his woorde is purely taught, and seek to worship the very true God, and yet offer the sacrifice of soules, if he giveth not care to be taught in the holy doctrine. How much more then where God speaketh not, but mens abominable inuentions are set vp. Let not this seeme harde, but marke our Saviour doth cite out of the prophet Iesay, Math.15. This people Math.15. draw near me with their lippes, and honour me with their mouth, but their hart is farre from me, in vaine do they worship me, teaching for doctrines mens precepts. There be a thousand abominations among the Papistes, which make their worship to be the sacrifice of soules, but if

thers

## 851 The eight Sermon.

there were no more but this, it doeth overthow them which add to us.

I will come now to a second sort of  
men which denie paperie, & yet care not  
for drawing neare to hearken. They can  
not away with the preaching (at least  
wise) with the stale preaching of Gods  
word. I can not tel what I shold terme  
them, but our land doeth swarne full of  
them in all places. They scriue out for  
prayer in Gods house. There is (say they)  
so much preaching that there is no time  
for prayer, godly prayers are hindred. Nea  
(say these) the prayers be better then all  
their prattling, for so it pleafeth them to  
terme preaching, by which God speakeþ  
 unto us.

¶ An dede prayer is a speciall part of  
Gods worship, but if a man doe not pray  
aright, though the prayer in it selfe bee  
most excellent which he uttereth, it is the  
sacrifice of a sole, it is turned into sinne.  
Lette vs consider the causes. The holy  
Ghost willeth, daid to hearken,  
when a man will worship God. And great  
reason, God is our soueraigne Lord,  
whom

# The eight Sermon. 130

Whom we are to serue. He is our king & lawmaker, whose will we are to obey and none other. He is our shæpheheard whose voice we must heare and follow him. <sup>John. 10.</sup> My shæpe heare my voice John. 10. He hath appointed & giuen pastors and teachers to ſeade his shæpe, <sup>Ephes. 4.</sup> Ephes. 4.

How canſt thou without contempt of Gods maiestie, yea without rebellion againſt the king, and renoucing thy ſhepherd, neglect to heare his voice? Thou art a blinde ſoile, thou art ſo ignorant, that thou dwelſt not vnderſtand the Lords prayer. Thou wouldest haue God heare thee ſpeaking thou knowest not what, & thou wilt not heare what he ſaith. What reaſon is it that God ſhould regard thofe which regard not him? Reade the firſte Chapter of the Prouerbes, and there yee ſhall ſee how wiſdome complayneth againſt theſe ignorant ſoiles, and denoun- ceth vengeance, I cried, and ſtretched forth my hand, and yee regarded not, but diſpiled my counſell, ye ſhal crie when your deſtruction commeth, and I will not heare.

## The eight Sermon.

If this doctrine doe seeme hard, heare  
what is written Proverbs 28. Hee that  
turneth away his care from hearing the  
law, euен his prayer shalbe abhomina-  
ble. Is not this plaine inough, to shewe  
that God abhorreth the prayers of blind  
ignorant persons, which care not for his  
word? What shall we say then of perse-  
cuters of Gods word? they must needs  
be worse, Our Lord and Saviour doeth  
call them dogs. Such as doe not regards  
the precious and heauenly doctrine, bee  
doeth liken unto swine which care not  
for pearles, but tread them in the mire.  
Such as hate the holy things of God of-  
fered them, and doe persecute the bri-  
ngers, he compareth to dogs which turns  
againe and rent them.

Consider now beloved, how woful is  
the state of all these? The men which do  
not hearken to Gods voyce, but to super-  
stitions inuentioes, those that despise and  
set light by the preaching of the word, or  
heare, and doe not obey it: such also as be  
persecuters of the same, all their prayers  
are turned into flanne, they offer the sacri-  
fice

lice of soules, God doth abhorrē them, and all their doings. Destruction and miserie come vpon them, they crie vnto God but he doeth not heare them, they be never the better: yea, they doe increase their sin by praying. For ( as he saith here) they doe euill.

I know it will be here replied, that the Scripture daeth promise, that he which calleth vpon God shalbe heard, and at what time soever a sinner doeth repents him of his sinne, all his wickednes shall be done away. This must needs be true, but yet wee must understande, that the prayer and repentance which are allowēd before God, proceed from faith, which is Gods gifte, the work of the holy ghost, and not in a mans owne power. What soever is not of faith is sinne, Rom 14. Rom.14. which is all one with that which our saviour doeth teach John 15. Where hee John.15. compareth himselfe to the true vine, and the faithfull to the branches. The branch can bring forth no fruite except it abide in the vine, no more can we do any thing except we abide in Christ. All that is of our

## The eight Sermon.

our selues is corrupt, yea euен p[re]ayer[s].  
Nothing please[n]t God but that whiche  
procædeth from y[our] spirit of Christ, whiche  
those only haue that are graffed into him  
by faith. And this is by the w[ord]e, as he  
saith in the same place, if ye abide in me,  
and my w[ord] abide in you, aske what ye  
will, and it shall be done vnto you.

Wherfore brethren, receiu[e] this in-  
struction of Solomon, Take heede to thy  
feet when thou goest to Gods house, &  
drawe neere to hearken, rather then to  
offer the sacrifice of fooles. Bow down  
with reuerence, with feare & trembling,  
to heare the voyce of your God, and to  
know and obey his will: then crie, & he  
will heare you, your p[re]ayer shal come vp  
before him as sweete incense. Other wise  
ye shall be but fooles. Let vs proceede to  
that whiche followeth. Be not rash with  
thy mouth, neither let thy hart make  
hast to vtter a thing before God: for  
God is in heauen and thou art vpon  
earth, and therfore let thy words be few.  
The former verse did gine vs instructiō,  
that in seeking to worship God, we must  
gine

give eare and hearken to his voice.

Now in this he giveth rules how we  
are to speake vnto him. For in Gods  
house, the Lord God speaketh vnto vs,  
& againe we speake vnto him. He spea-  
keth when the faithfull sheepheards do  
declare his word. We speake in prayer,  
in thanksgiving, in making promises &  
vowes. Looke what he speaketh it is to  
be accepted, because he is most holy, and  
nothing can come from him but that  
which is pure and good. Contrariwise we  
be corrupt, and all that we speake is fo-  
lish and vile, unlesse it be ordered by his  
holy spirit. Therfore we must be taught  
of him how to speake: we may not come  
at aduenture before the Lord to speake  
vnto him, for he is a great king, and we  
are poure and base wormes. He is full of  
glory, power, and heauenly maiestie, we  
are dust & ashes. We ought to consider  
therefore into whose presence we come,  
and vnto whom we speake: and this is it  
which he saith, God is in heauen, and  
thou art vpon the earth.

Our Saviour prescribing vnto vs a  
forme

## The eight Sermon.

our selues is corrupt, yea euен prayers. Nothing pleaseþ God but that which procedeth from þ spirit of Christ, which those only haue that are grafted into him by faith. And this is by the wo:de, as he saith in the same place, if ye abide in me, and my wo:rd abide in you, aske what ye will, and it shall be done vnto you.

Wherfore brethren, receive this instruction of Solomon, Take heede to thy feet when thou goest to Gods house, & drawe neere to hearken, rather then to offer the sacrifice of fooles. Bow down with reuerence, with feare & trembling, to heare the voyce of your God, and to know and obey his will: then crie, & he will heare you, your prayer shal come vp before him as sweete incense. Other wise yee shall be but fooles. Let vs proceede to that which followeth. Be not rash with thy mouth, neither let thy hart make hast to vtter a thing before God: for God is in heauen and thou art vpon earth, and therfore let thy words be few. The former verse did giue vs instructiō, that in seeking to worship God, we must giue

givē eare and hearken to his voice.

Now in this he giveth rules how we  
are to speake vnto him. For in Gods  
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& againe we speake vnto him. He spea-  
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in thanksgiving, in making promises &  
vowes. Looke what he speaketh it is to  
be accepted, because he is most holy, and  
nothing can come from him but that  
which is pure and good. Contrariwise vs  
be corrupt, and all that we speake is foo-  
lish and vile, unlesse it be ordered by his  
holy spirit. Therfore we must be taught  
of him how to speake: we may not come  
at aduenture before the Lord to speake  
vnto him, for he is a great king, and we  
are poore and base wormes. He is full of  
glossy, power, and heauenly maiestie, we  
are dust & ashes. We ought to consider  
therfore into whose presence we come,  
and vnto whom we speake: and this is it  
which he saith, God is in heauen, and  
thou art vpon the earth.

Our Saviour prescribing vnto vs a  
forme

## The eight Sermon.

forme of prayer, leadeth vs unto þ same,  
when he willeth vs to say, Our Father,  
which art in heauen. The necessitie of  
this precept is to bee esteemed from our  
disposition, how rude, how vnreuerent, &  
how unmanerly our hearts be, when  
we speake to the Lord. We dare not in  
such sort speake unto an earthly prince,  
no not to a man of meane worship. But  
to avide this rudenes, and to come with  
due reuerence, yea even with feare and  
trembling before so high a Maiestie, he  
willeth each man not to be rash with his  
mouth, no, to let his heart make hastie to  
utter a thing before God, where reuerence  
is set a part of him to whom he spea-  
keth, a man doth hastyly and rashly bab-  
ble whatsoever commeth into his mind.  
But when he doth carrie great reuerence,  
hee doeth not speake but with feare and  
trembling, advisedly saying whatsoever  
he doeth utter. When we come to speake  
unto þ God of glory, how wicked a thing  
is it to come vnreuerently, and yet men  
doe it, and as boldly as it were to come  
before the meanest man vpon earth. Nay  
there

there is no man would take it well, but thinke he were mocked and despised as a foole, if men should speake so unto him, as they do vnto God. It is true that there be some outward signes of reverence, as knelling or bowing, which is meete, but God doth looke vpon the hart. They babble and utter wordes with their mouth which they understand not, or speaking them, their mind is vpon other matters. This is a foule contempt of Gods maiestie, a sinne which shall be punished with the vengeance of eternall fire. He that is rash with his mouth, & doeth let his hart make hast to speake vnto God, doeth not reverence his gloriouse maiestie: and yet ye see how such blind & grosse hypocrites do glory in their vaine babbling, euen when they know not what they say.

Let vs consider beloved how to eschew this euill; how shall a man frame himselfe, that he may not unadvisedly & rashly speake vnto God, but with reverence which is due, yea with feare & trembling? I will shew ye. Firste consider deeply, of that he saith, God is in heauen. Consider

## The eight Sermon.

I say what a great and glorious God hee  
is. His maiestie and power are aboue the  
beauens. He is iust, holy and good, a ha-  
ter of all iniquitie and vncleannessesse: the  
fountaine and giuer of all good things: lo-  
ning to the fafhfull, and a most terrible  
God to the wicked. Then looke vpon thy  
selfe, remember that he saith here, thou  
art vpon earth. Thou art weake, base,  
unfull and miserable. What art thou to  
come before him? how wilt thou speake  
vnto him? wherein shalt thou be regar-  
ded? consider thine vnworhinessse, cast  
downe thy selfe in humilitie, with y<sup>e</sup> sense  
and feeling of thy sins and beggerlinessse.  
Looke what he doeth promise to giue,  
crave it earnestly with stedfast faith, and  
with a groning spirite. Not thus when  
they come to speake vnto God, are raf-  
fle & fooleish, they imagine that the very bab-  
bling of words is a seruice of God, and as  
the blind Papistes thought, if a man did  
one day say more then his ordinarie stint,  
God was in his debte: and we<sup>e</sup> see how  
the fooleish pardons are granted from the  
bishop of Rome, with condition that a  
man

man shall say ouer seuen or ten Ave Ma-  
ties, and so many Pater nosters.

Solomon giueth warning to beware  
of this: Be not rash with thy mouth, nei-  
ther let thy heart make hast to vtter a  
thing before God. To performe this  
there is neede of deepe meditation before  
a man pray: the vnskilfull and vntaught  
in Gods holy word, can not meditate any  
thing but corruptly, and after the rotten  
braine of flesh and bloud in vaine imagi-  
nation, and therefore they can not pray  
aright: they cast forth their words and  
desires vnauidedly, they come rudely  
before God, because they know not him  
nor yet theinselues. By his heauenly  
word, the Lord doth reueale himselfe vn-  
to vs, by the knowledge and light there-  
of we behold his glory, we are caried vn-  
to a wonderment and admiration of his  
excellencie, we reuerence him, we trem-  
ble before him. As by the worde we be-  
hold God, that in him is life and all good  
things, so by the same wee see and know  
our selues, that we be very corruption &  
miserie: we be poore, naked, and void of

## The eight Sermon.

all god things. He is the bottomles fountaine of holines, life and ioy: if we will haue ought, we must draw it from him.

This may lead vs to humilitie, to hunger & thirst for his heauenly gifts: hunger and thirst be such things as no man can endure, but will speedily crie out for relief. The hungrie and thirstie soule doth make as great hast vnto God, and doth vehemently crie out to be refreshed: such doth God call for, such onely doth he heare, all other do not pray, but babble.

Iesay. 55. The prophet Iesay chapt. 55. doth in the name of the Lord proclaime, Comes to the waters all that be a thirst. The blessed virgin in her song saith, that he filleth the hungrie with good things, and the rich he sendeth away emptie. Those be called rich which feele not their miserie. And Christ saith, Come vnto me all yee that trauaile and be heauy laden, and I will refresh ye, Math. 11. Againe by the word of the Lord, we see what he hath promised vs. For we must aske according to his will, and not after our owne fantasies & desires: we must also aske in faith & not waner,

# The eight Sermon. I 35

swauer, or else we shall receive nothing,  
Iam. 1. ~~which can not be but where we~~ Iam. 1.  
have his promise : we must give him  
thankes and praise with unsainted harts.

All this is to be done as he willeth in  
se we words, for it followeth after he had  
said, God is in heauen and thou art vpon  
the earth, therfore let thy words be few.  
The faithful soule doth crie continuallie  
vnto God: for being in continuall nerde,  
it watcheth vnto prayer. But yet the  
words are fewe. On the other side, the  
blinde and foolish, as our Saviour shew-  
eth Mat. 6. vse many words, much bab-  
bling, and vaine repetitions, for which  
they thinke to be heard. They wish and  
desire euuen as their blinde fantasie doeth  
leade them: they speake they knowe not  
what, they multiply words vpon words,  
babbling vpon babbling, supposing that  
they do a great god thing to please God.  
We are warned ye see, to take hede of  
such rashnes.

Math.6.

What are now all the prayers, the  
bowes and thanks giving of the Popish  
Church? What is all the babbling of

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long prayers, either publike or private, where the word of the Lorde is not opened to the people? Can they haue those former things which I noted? Is it possible that they should not be rash in speaking vnto God? They think if they haue tumbled ouer their stinte and full number of prayers, all is well, they laye on tongue, they cannot tell what, neither do they much care, their heart is blind and wicked. When they haue cast behinde their backes the word of the Lord, & haue filled themselves with lustes and vayne pleasures, forgetting God, yet they must for fashion sake, haue halfe an hower to rumble ouer a sort of prayers, when the heart is drowned in securitie.

These be fooles, yea these bewray the selues to be fooles, for he saith, that like as a dreame commeth foorth by the multitude of busines, so the voice of a fool by the multitude of words. Looke how a mans minde which is earnestly busied in the day time, doeth dreame of it in the night: and so out of the multitude of busines the dreame doeth disclose it selfe, even

ven so by many words the voice of a soule  
is bewrayed. We doe account the soules  
which are full of words, and prattle un-  
aduisedly of euery matter: and what rea-  
son is it that we should not, as it is here  
said, take them to be soules which doe so  
vnto God? What shall we say then of al  
the popish worship, and of the Papistes  
which do bable many words which they  
do not vnderstand? What shall we thinke  
of those also which wil haue praier with  
so many words, & so many turnings in &  
out in the publike assembly, when thou  
vowest a vow to God, &c. This is ano-  
ther part of Gods worship, about which  
he doeth instruct. We speake to God in  
praier, & in thanksgiving: so do we also  
in bowing bowes: for we make a solene  
promise to God either to doe some good  
thing, or else to forfaine some euill.

In old time some of the kings of Iuda  
did cause the people to sweare, that they  
would serue the Lord & cleane vnto him,  
and renounce the worship of idols. Holy  
men of God in their afflictions did bow  
and promise to God, that when he should

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Deliver them , they would openly declare his praise . We haue in baptisme vowed to consecrate our selues , even our soules & our bodies to God , by renouncing the diuell , the world , and the flesh . If we goe backe from this our vowe , how can we come rightly to Gods table ? for there we doe also renew the same : wee bind our selues with promises unto God . There be also particular vowes & promises , as every man hath cause . If we feele our selues slacke unto godd duties , we are to stirre vp our selues , & to bind our selues by some earnest promise to God . If we be inclined to any vice , we are to do the like . When we be in distres & seeke helpe at Gods hands , we promise vpon our deliverance to be thankefull and obedient . We must take heed in al these that we be not rash with our mouth , nor let our hart make hast to vitter a promise . We must be well aduised what we sweare & promise to God . What a fault is it accounted in such as will promise much unto men , & performe little ? do not all despise such persons ? the fault is much greater when there

there is promise made unto God and not performed. He willeth therefore that he which hath bowed be not slacke to performe his bow: they be daine fooles which make promise and pay it not: & God is not delighted in fooles, God is delighted in his true worshippers.

Now therefore and performe. For he saith, it is better not to bow, then to bow and not to performinge: we are to bow unto God, and therefore it is euill not to bow: but it is a greater euill to bow, & not to do that we have bowed. Men are rash & afterward do repent, then seeke they to excuse the matter that they did ignorantlie: but this will not serue, for he saith, Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sinne, and say not before the Angell that it is an error: why should God be angrie at thy voice & destroy the worke of thy handes. He that rashly maketh bowes to God, may very well be said to suffer his mouth to cause his flesh to sin, that is himselfe, a part being put for the whole. As often on the contrary, the scripture doth vse to put þ soule for the whole man.

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man. There is no excuse before the Lord Christ, who is the Angel he here speakest of, when he saith, say not before the Angel it was an error, for he is called the **Malach. 3** Angel of the couenant, Malach. 3. Make what excuse thou canst to excuse thy rashnes, yet Gods wrath shal be kindled against thee, he will plague & punish thee: he will (as it is here said) destroy the worke of thy hands.

It is a lamentable case, why wilt thou cast thy selfe into it? againe he bleseth a comparision: In the multitude of dreames (saith he) there be vanities, so in the multitude of words. W<sup>e</sup> see he likeneth those foolish bowes made to God, vnto d<sup>r</sup>eams, which are but vanitie, but feare thou God. Know thou well vnto whom thou speakest, and be wel aduised, & keepe thy promise. Thus we see b<sup>r</sup>iefly what is to be obserued in our bowes which we make vnto God. Let vs consider in some particulerers who breake these rules.

And first for our generall bow in baptisme, we haue promised to consecrate both our soules and bodies to the service

of God in true holinesse, by renouncing the deuill and all sinfull lustes. Then all such as despise Gods truth and walke in darkenesse after the flesh, haue besides all other there sins, this great burthen vpon them, that they be vowbreakers, they haue broken their faith, & promise made vnto God. It had bæne better for them never to haue vowed, then thus to deale, they be in a bad case.

Secondly those offend (as we see it vsually come to passe) which in great affliction make promise if God deliuer the they will gloriſſe him, but are false. For God doeth will vs, Psal. 50. Call vpon me Psal. 50. in the day of affliction, I will deliuer thee, and thou shalt gloriſſe me. When a man hath lewdly spent his time, in riot, in drunkennes, in wantonnes, in enuie, hatred, and malice. If God strike him with greuous sicknes, that his bones seeme to rattle in his skinne, and that he feareth death, then doth he tremble, then doeth he desire that God wil haue mercy vpon him, and then doth he make boyles and promises: If God doe restore me to health

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health againe, and geue mee life, I will never be the man I haue bēne. I haue lived a naughtie life, I haue dishonoured God, I haue despised his worde, I will harken to his voice, & leaue my naughty vices, and live to Gods glorie. How wel were this, if men did as they say. But marke, and ye shall finde the most parte so soone as ever they be recovered, & can but crawle out, fall againe to their former wayes, and be as evill, or worse then euer they were before. What shall wee say of these men, are they not greuous offenders? I haue obserued some very wicked liuers: God hath stricken them, and terrified them, so that with teares they haue confessed their ungodly behauiour. They haue promised and vowed, if God would restore them, to become new men. They haue recovered, and become as vile in sinne as before. God hath stricken them againe, and they haue died in fury and rage, without any appearance of grace, or remorse. Doth not this shew that Gods wrath is heauie against such faithlesse bothe breakers?

Let

Let men (as he saith) feare God. Let them take heede how they dallie w<sup>t</sup> him, for sure God will destroy such, and al the worke of their handes.

Moreover whē he saith pay that thou vowest, hee condemneth all those rash vowe<sup>s</sup> which are not agreeable to þ ruls of Gods word, which be not to his glory, or that be not in our power. For such vowe<sup>s</sup> are not to be performed. King Herod promised with an oath to the daughter of Herodias, þ he would geue whatsoever she should aske, to the halfe of his kingdome. She asked the head of Iohn the Baptist, it had bēne much better for him to haue repented of his rash oath, & not haue performed it, then to shedd the innocent bloud of so great a servant of God. Iephtha vowed when hee went to warre, that if the Lord should geue him victorie, at his returne that which should first come out at his dores to meeke him, should be the Lords, or els he would offer it for a burnt offering. Meanning, that if it were such as might be offered in sacrifice, it should: if not, it should be conse-  
crate

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crate to the Lord. What warrant had he to make such a boewe? how should it be to Gods glorie? He was punished, for his daughter (being his onely child) first met him, and though it were grēuous, he did with her as he had vowed: she was let go a time to bewayle her virginitie, & then put a parte to the Lorde, and restrained from mariage, for so they thought it must be, and it is said she knew no man: and by a decree the daughters of Israel went yere by yere, four dayes in the yere, to talke with the daughter of Iephtha: for it is too hard to charge a faithfull man w slaying his daughter in sacrifice. Many haue beeне deceipted in so thinking, the Church of Rome wil haue men and women bow virginitie. Our Sauour saith all men are not able to doe so, to liue unmarried, but those to whom it is geuen. To the same effect teacheth Saint Paul, 1. Cor. 7. They againe replie and say, let a man aske, and he shall receive.

But this is true against them, that he which receiueth that he doeth aske, asketh that which God hath promised to givē

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geue him: or els, if hee take vpon hym y  
which God doeth not promise to make  
him able to performe, he may aske, & not  
receiue, for he tempteth God, and com-  
mitteth a greuous sinne. And we may  
see by lamentable expeience, how God  
hath punished such rash bowes: when  
the stink of that horrible filthines which  
was committed euery where by monks,  
friers, nunnes, & prieses, is not yet out  
of our noses. All such bowes are abho-  
minable. Now according to Gods holis  
wil, to his glory and praise, in y which he  
hath promised to inhable vs by his grace  
to performe, and pay it.

It is a sinne not to bow such things:  
it is a greater sinne, to bowe and not to  
performe them. I will here end, not en-  
tring into that sea of foolish, rash, and vn-  
discrete bowes, which vpon euery occa-  
sion both men and women do take vpon  
thē, not considering to whom they speak.  
God of his mercy open our eyes, & kēps  
vs frō this rash dealing with him. Amen.

FINIS.

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